

They felt blank and  
stared there  
and waited until  
they might melt away  
years and years  
in a big blank box

I'm tasting  
blankness in my  
every breath

nothing but this  
empty taste

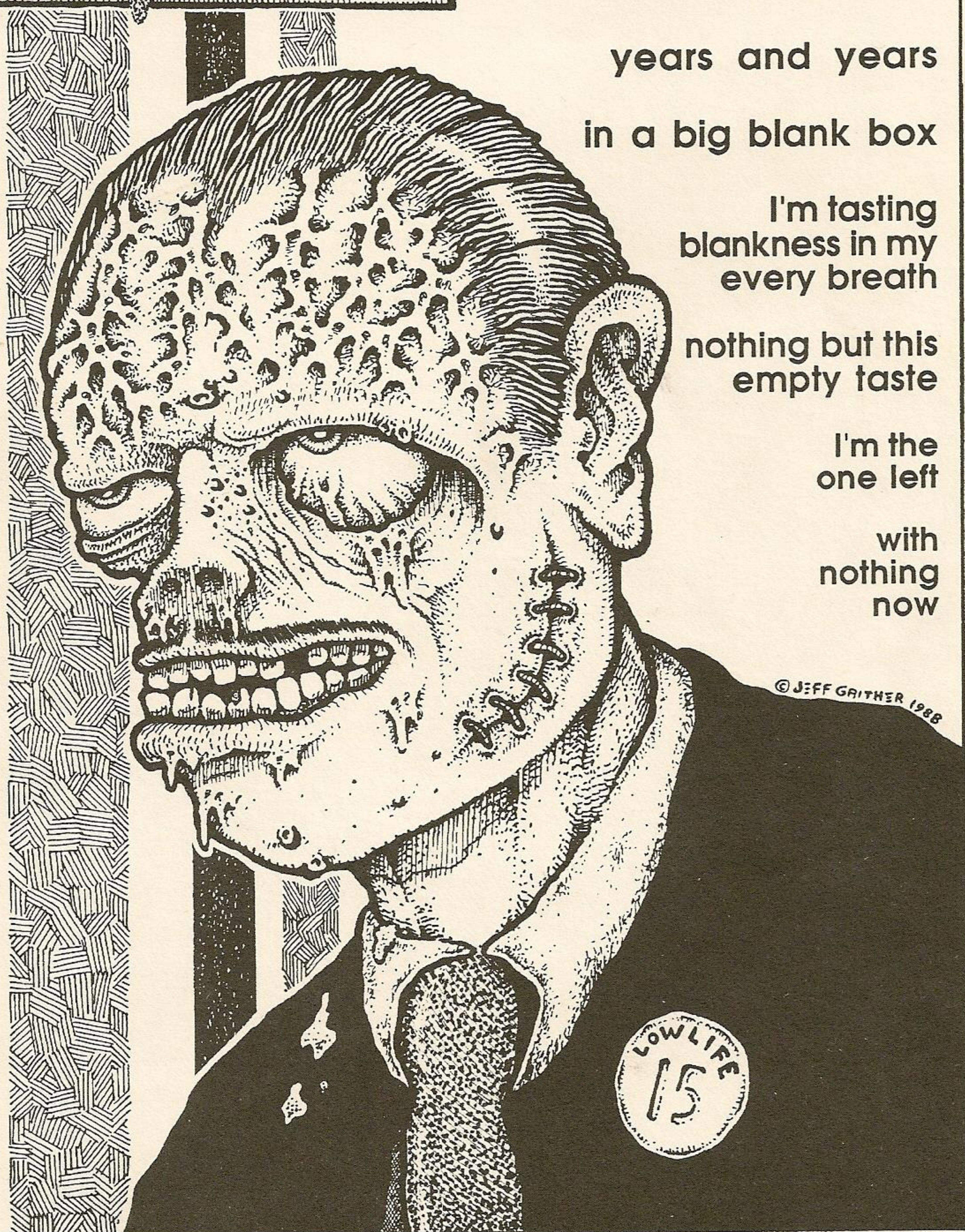
I'm the  
one left

with  
nothing  
now

**BLANK**

They  
were  
surprised  
when  
there  
wasn't

anything  
left  
anymore



© JEFF GAITHER 1988







# GREETINGS

For better or worse welcome to another issue of LowLife. Since last time we had another Destroy All Music Festival, but there's not time to talk about it here. You will get a full report in #16. Thanks this issue to Ellen, Arthur, Daniel, RRRon, Don, Dea Anne, Jeff, Robert, Craig, Tracy, Jon, Grace, Molli, Liz, Miekal, Lang, A. Mann, Slew, Lisa, Charlie, Benjamin, Ernest Mann, Keith Goshorn, Larry Obec, Andy, Meg, Cestmir Kaika (RIP), Alan Sondheim, Bill Callahan, J. Kokolia, Dixon, S. Cerio, Lindley Bhanji, Miroslav Janousek Jr., Ivan Sladek, and Ruth Laxson. Laser type by *LazerAge*. Printing by Walton Press. Front cover art by Jeff Gaither. Front cover poem by Craig Woodall, Inside front cover by Charlie Nash, Back cover by A. Mann. Subscriptions to LowLife are \$20 for six issues. LowLife #15 costs \$4. Ad rates are as follows: Full page. (7"x9.75") \$95, half page (7"x4.875") \$60, and quarter page (3.5"x4.875") \$35. Expect LowLife #16 sometimes this summer. Make all checks payable to Glen Thrasher and send mail to LowLife at POB 8213, Atlanta, Ga., 30306-0213.





# LETTERS

## LowLife Compilation Stinks

Glen

...I liked about 4~5 songs on your tape—thought the rest stunk—its easy to understand why these bands remain obscure/un-appreciated.

—Ron  
(RRRecords)



## Musicians Beg To Be Forgiven

Dear-ist Glen,

Received your ah - card today. Please FORGIVE - us - our we have not Been in ah - very good situation up here - person-son—all-lee speaking - anyways - as we have blown it on the 7" comp bubbos(your words).....we hope you will acccepptah! our APPOLL - OH - Gee • and hope and pray This doesn't mean WAR~ and so as to make it up to you~Please "you" and Ms. Ellen be our guest at our show in Atlanta at the UPSTAGE~La-donna will be working with us on SAT. and i will sing you a SONG OF LOVE and BEG FORGIVE-AH-NESS, and if you aren't able to make it, we will understand~

your friends  
Dennis

&

Bob  
(Shaking Ray  
Levis)







# REVIEWS

Because of the relatively enormous amount of stuff we are getting in the mail these days for review (relative to the very finite capacity of our lives, not to mention our brains, it is not possible that everything we receive in the mail gets reviewed in LowLife. It is also true that some items don't seem worth reviewing. If something you sent was not reviewed it was for one of these several reasons. Perhaps we'll get to it next time. If not, how much difference do you think it will really make? Send anything you want to send to POB 8213, Atlanta, Ga., 30306-0213, USA. Reviews in this issue by Lisa Carver, Jon Kincaid, Larry Obrec, Ellen McGrail, Lang Thompson, and Glen Thrasher (G.T.).

## PUBLICATIONS

*Afterbirth* #3 This third edition of *Afterbirth* will be the last to come out of Atlanta because Susan is moving on to parts unknown (to me anyway) and taking her zine with her, of course. It couldn't be any other way. This continues to be an original and personal publication, and I'm sure it will wherever it may roam. There's a wholeness to the entire production and contents despite the diversity of contributors and material. Articles include an interview with longtime Atlanta street person and magazine salesman, Wolf, a conversation between two strippers, some advice on herbal treatments of vaginal infection and Kerry Thornley doing his usual thing. The address will change. In the meantime I guess you could write to the following post office box and hope that your mail gets to where it's supposed to get (from POB 392, Decatur, Ga., 30031, USA)

*Artpolice* continues to be one of the more exciting and original of the all art zines. On a purely personal level I think the most recent issue is a bit of a low point. Yet, as always there is amazing stuff worth staring at, especially the Frank Gaard, Bob Corbit, Chris Woodward pieces that take up the middle of the mag. Also the uncredited thing, "Peros Can Assume Any Form", I think by Frank, is a swirl of lurid imagery potentially too thought provoking for the meek. (\$2.50 from 3131 First Avenue South, Mpls., MN., 55408-3136, USA)

*Bananafish* #3 (Nov. 1934) If I had to recommend only one music oriented fanzine in this issue, I'd have no problem deciding that that one should be *Bananafish*. This time around Mr. Seymour Glass has amassed another pile of interviews/features with the likes of Three Day Stubble, Caroliner Rainbow, Tragic Mulatto, Negativland, and Emile Beaulieu. Adhering to the standard rockzine format of letters, interviews and reviews, our editor proceeds to throw everything off-kilter from there on out. Get this and you'll know. (from POB 3255, Berkeley, CA., 94703, USA)

*Box of Water* #4 This one is half artzine and half reviews of publications, a little bit like Scrap with the best of Factsheet Five tacked on to the end. Box of Water only comes out once a year and the care that goes into it shows clearly.

Contributors of art include lots of names that ought to be familiar to close readers of LowLife. These include Lloyd Dunn, Minoy, Chris Winkler, Ivan Sladek, and Stewart Home. The exclusion of exact credits on anything inside of the front and back covers gives these divergent aesthetics enough unification to resemble one complete work. The reviews are mostly of magazines within a vaguely similar arena. I highly recommend this. (from Stephen Perkins, 135 Cole St., S.F., CA., 94117, USA)

*Chemical Imbalance* #8 This magazine has come a long way from its measly beginnings, but I guess the same could be said for a lot of magazines. Still, few have reached the gargantuan proportions of *CI*. In the process of making this into the monster that it is Mike Whatsisname has obviously spent a great deal of time and money removing himself more and more out of the zine and pouring everything else he could find into it. I wonder if the decision to follow this course was his own or his detractors'. Anyway, the result is a very impressive package. Not quite the ultimate cool underground mag for the 80s/90s that Mike probably wants it to be, but really close. Of significant interest to yours truly this time: Johnny Marr on anti-rock books, "Accidents" by Jack Stevenson, excerpts from Duplex Planet, interviews with Peter Bagge, Nick Tosches, Daniel Johnston, George Kuchar, and Robert Williams, and plenty of good comics and art. A full color Daniel J. cover wraps this up nicely. There is lots more besides what I'm listing, but if I include everything that is here, I will not have any room left to review any other zines. Anybody that passes this up because somebody you've never met thinks its editor is unhip or pathetic deserves to miss out on all this good reading. As usual, it comes with a record that has some music by some bands on it. (\$4 from POB 1656, Cooper Station, N.Y., N.Y., 10276, USA)

*Cinemondo* There's not much underground about this film buffs' monthly, available free around town at various movie rental houses, record stores, and laundromats. Mostly comprised of positive reviews of current releases as well as a selection of reviews of older movies available on video, the writing is thoughtful without being rigorous. Each issue also includes some interesting longer features. For example: a guide to the best and worst of local movie houses in #4 and a critical filmology of John Carpenter in #5. "Your Movie Buddy", as *Cinemondo* proclaims itself, is just that and stays far away from any radical or highly analytical approaches to film art. Yet, as a fun quick guide to movies, this magazine is hard to beat. Subscriptions are available for \$12 from Cinemondo, 455 E. Paces Ferry Rd., Suite 302, Atlanta, Ga., 30305, USA.

*Cryptical Oyster* #3 Here's a way out of step little magazine of ideas and literature. The slant here is vaguely anarchist, but I don't know... There's a picture of "Bob" on the front so once I tell Ivan Stang about it he is going to take the editor to court. This Swartz character probably thought he was hiding by moving to Alabama, but he was wrong. (\$2 from Michael Swartz, POB 289, Auburn, AL., 36831-0289)

*Cubist Pop Manifesto* #4 Offbeat, sloppy, childish and clever as hell, all at the same time, *Cubist Pop Manifesto* is quite unlike most other music fanzines. Not that there is a lot



to get excited about here. What is here is simply not just like everybody else. Something weird is obviously going on when a feature on Better Than Death is slapped up beside a page of Molly Ringwald trivia. You can't beat the price (35¢ from 3408 Juliet St., Pittsburgh, PA., 15213, USA)

*Dagger #8* Reviewing this one need not take the diligent critic too far beyond the front cover where they will learn that this issue contains the requisite features on one Blast First group (Band of Susans), one Homestead band (Bastro), one Touch & Go group (the Didjits) and one band on Alblni's label (Rifle Sport), which should get the editor on a few promo lists, if nothing else. Otherwise, there are reviews, "desert island discs", Baboon Dooley, shitty paste-up, bad photo-copying, and "much more". Reading *Dagger* will give you that strange but familiar feeling you've been through this all before. It's just more debris from the current wave recognizably hip social sub-set, and you know you want nothing to do with it unless you are it too. (from Tim Hinely, POB 460, Somers Pt., N.J., 08244, USA)

*Distant Violins #25* How about a no big deal Australian rockzine edited, mostly written, by a guy who hates the Velvet Underground, but thinks Your Mom Too is ok? D.V. is a very brief fanzine of almost nothing but reviews and interviews. Its funny, bitchy temperament and exotic (from where I'm sitting) subject matter raise this to a higher level than the average member of the genre, but it is not as if reading this will change your life or anything else much. (from POB 219, Newton, NSW 204 two, Australia)

*Earth Pig* "I just saw the biggest piece of dog poop I'd ever seen! I also found a fallopian tube with puke on it. I think there was foul play involved" (from Davold, POB 348, Hawthorne, N.J., 07507, USA)

*Factsheet Five #29* Mike Gunderloy is a boring old bump on a log and his magazine is ugly too! I would be sorry if Mike stopped reviewing LowLife because I said that, though I always think his reviews of this magazine (even when he gave it his "Publisher's Choice" stamp of approval) are way off the mark. Yet, no matter what Mike says, his zine of zines, *Factsheet Five* (FS5) has always been and continues to be one of my principle sources of new readers. Publishing this zine would be much less interesting if I couldn't be certain of getting a review of every issue in FS5. A lot of other little guy type editors are in much the same boat. Without FS5 or

something else like it, the small press scene as we know it would be a very different thing than it is. But would it be worse? Because of its unique role FS5 sits in a virtually untouchable position. From time to time I will read about (in FS5!) some other publication trying to do the same thing, but no one ever seems to keep it up for long. I've heard criticism and abuse poured on the editors of *Sound Choice*, *Forced Exposure*, *Maximum Rock and Roll*, *Option* and every other major market zine you can think of, but Mike remains almost unscathed. He certainly must have his share of enemies sitting in the position of judgement that he does, but the voices that count usually speak fondly of Mike and his magazine, or they don't speak at all. Even in *Option* where (other) fanzines are barely touched upon, *Factsheet Five* gets a plug everytime they run the zine column. It is a curious situation. It is not as if FS5 is without its faults. Personally, I think Mike lacks imagination. I think he's afraid of what tends to disrupt his own sense of order. Perhaps someone is saying, "who isn't?" Probably nobody. Mike really does do a decent job of maintaining a cool headed "subjective" position on most of the products he writes about to the point where his reviews are boring for their lack of conflict. He obviously loves his work, but he is also a dictator, and I wanted to make it clear that some of us don't recognize his divine authority even as we continue to live by its laws. (from 6 Arizona Ave., Rensselaer, N.Y., 12144, USA)

*File 13 #2 & #3* This was supposed to be the zine of stuff other zines had rejected, but it's quickly turning into a zine with a face of its own, despite the appearance of a couple of actually rejected pieces. I'd be interested to know just exactly who rejected these stories. Beyond that I begin to wonder if these rejects weren't better left unpublished. I mean, I've heard the truly ho hum L.P. by the Stripminers and an even more boring cassette by Venus Fly Trap. I've talked to Ron Lessard on the telephone, etc. These aren't experiences I'm that anxious to share with the rest of you. #3 is mostly reviews of mostly obscure stuff and another exciting interview, this time with some guy from Big Audio Dynamite. *File 13* is a magazine that's trying to be different, as it strives to be just the same as all the rest, and, so far, its keeping my attention. (45¢ in stamps from Mark Lo, 115 Wedgewood Circle, Eatontown, N.J., 07724, USA)

*Film Threat #17* Most of this issue is devoted to cultural icon James Dean, a topic which is hardly underground, but the way it is handled is kind of subversive and real funny. Gore's

Jazz

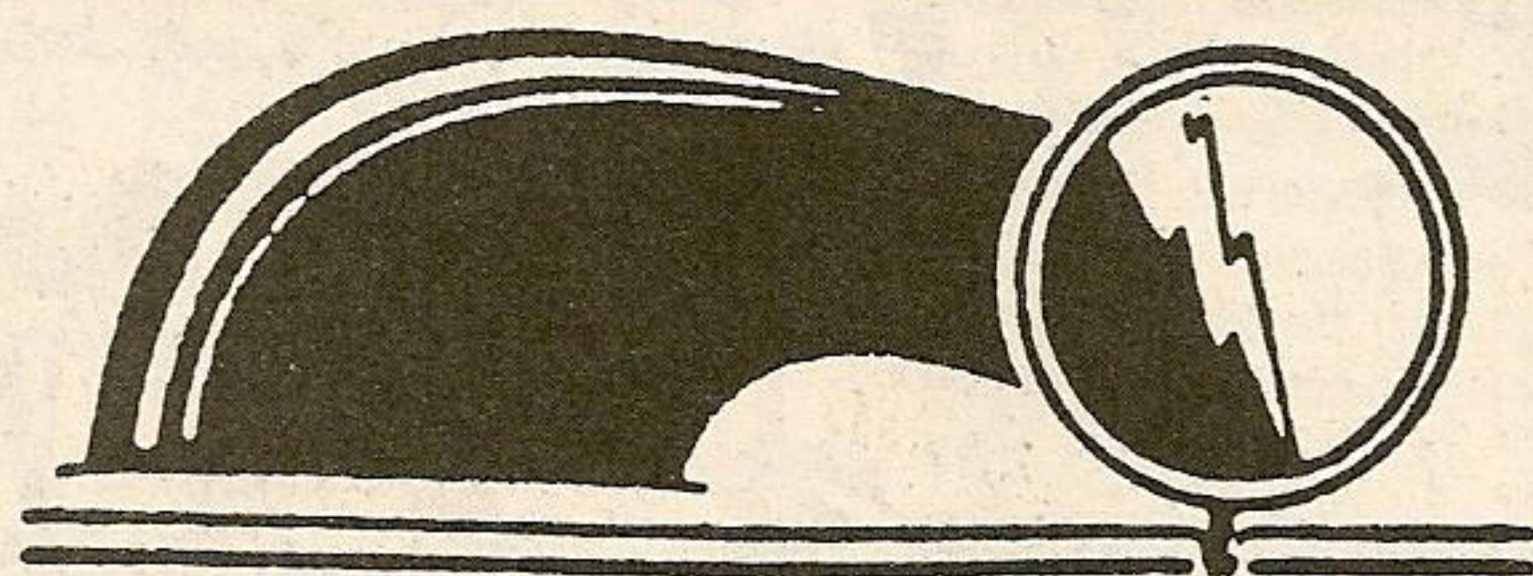
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Rock

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**LL00** LowLife Free Tape (C90)  
Available in a very limited supply to new subscribers. Subscriptions are \$20 for the next six issues. This compilation includes previously unheard cuts by Half Japanese, Fish & Roses, Crawling With Tarts, Costes, Suckdog, Blowgun, Cake, Freedom Puff, Shaking Ray Levis, Killing People, Due Process, Your Mom Too, and more. This tape is not for sale at any price. The only way you can get this is to subscribe to LowLife, and you better act fast because these will not last long.

**RRR/Low** LowLife Free Record (7" 33)  
A real record c/o RRRecords with six bands including Freedom Puff, Blowgun, Cake, Nature Protein Biscuit, and Tinnitus. Also famous stupid band you don't want to hear about with dead "singer". Not Flipper! Comes free with LowLife #15. Not for sale at any price, at least not from us.

**LL01** Tinnitus: Forgetting (C90)  
Atlanta's masters of noise, improv, technology, and everything else return with this Fort! da?/LowLife co-release. It is their best recorded document yet. \$6

**LL02** Borbetomagus: Live In Allentown (C45)  
Sax, guitar, feedback, total destruction to your mind. The greatest noise makers in the US with a typically great set. \$6

**LL03** Freedom Puff: Paperbag (C60)  
Atlanta's most popular band! All the hits! Comes in a real brown paper bag. \$5

**LL04** Cake: Solo (C60)  
Tracy Terrill's lovely sad mournful songs are unlike any others anywhere. \$5

**LL05** Let the City Gravel (C60)  
Follow up to the popular previous sampler. All the Atlanta groups you've come to love: Father Harry, Cuban Uprising, Swarthy Lads, David T. Lindsey Is Bald, etc. \$5

**LL06** Medicine Suite: Beautiful Songs (C60)  
Long gone Atlanta band we just can't get out of our heads. Not just pure noise. No. \$5





marvelous historical rewrite of James Dean, "A Legend In Life Finally Meets Death" highlights this section. It's a brilliant bit of satire that even brings in Vampira, the curious villain of the issue, for a Family style slaughter of Dean's neverwere wife and kids. The stuff on George Kuchar and Fassbinder at the end of the issue is nearly lost behind the fun stuff at the beginning. Buy this for the Dean material if you must but don't ignore the rest of it. (\$3.50 from POB 951, Royal Oak, MI, 48068)

*Flaccid* #5 If this fanzine was 29 pages of the lucid thoughts of Uzi Sluggpuke, with the rest relegated to the remaining one page, it would be one of the best fanzines in America, but instead it has only one page of Uzi and 29 other pages of other stuff, and it is not. (from 717 S.W. 4th #9, Corvallis, Oregon, 97333-4424)

*Flesh & Bones* #8 It is probably a bad sign for the state of rock today that one of the most entertaining rock magazines of our time is this one that wallows hopelessly in 70s culture. The introductory editorial (where the editor responds to accusations of 70s revivalism) is vague beyond claims of rock and roll's eternal nature. The magazine's formula works because its playful pastiche of odds and ends takes the only approach rock and roll deserved in the 70s: irrelevance. It is perhaps the only approach it deserves now. What's the alternative to rock and roll?, the Fleshhead asks, "Rap music? Skinny ties and checkered shoes?" How about something that kills off all that came before it instead of something that sucks off all that? How about something that throws us beyond what we know instead of something that reminds us of things we learned as children. In a semi-pathetic return to the womb, I read (and enjoy) *Flesh & Bones* for the same reasons I once read *Mad* then *National Lampoon* then *Creem* then *Punk* and I don't feel like I'm progressing much. I don't care much about most of the groups featured, but I really get into stuff like the guide to household inhalants and the Gwar cookbook. There are also interviews with Gary Panter and J.D. King. (\$2.50 from 351 Beechwood Avenue, Middlesex, N.J., 08846, USA)

*Full Disclosure* #16 FD is dedicated to exposing all the corrupt activities that big government and business (same thing basically) try to pass off in the name of whatever. #16 has a lengthy article on Nikola Tesla, the turn of the century inventor whose numerous important inventions are generally overlooked today so they can be applied to various secret military developments. Otherwise, the issue has the usual useful information on tax rights, surveillance, Police abuses, and so forth. This is a useful publication for anyone that values freedom. (\$1.50 from POB 8275-FD16, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 48107, USA)

*Improvisor* #8 The most comprehensive publication of information and views on improvisation in the U.S. is still this journal out of Birmingham, Alabama. It has graduated from its former stretched to the limits photo-copy format to this offset edition with, according to editor Davey Williams, "the same crappy layout." In truth, once you get past the front cover, it ain't a pretty sight. Sticking with this straight off the typewriter "samizdat" look is probably supposed to help maintain the original "underground" spirit or something or other, but it usually just makes it hard to read. And, believe me, there is a lot worth reading here. My favorite parts include an interview with Sang-Won Park, reprints of a fiery letter exchange between Elliott Sharp and a misguided *Village Voice* music reviewer named Kyle Gunn, with poor Leslie Dalaba in between, and the cool Karen Elliot article called "No More Masterpieces". There is more than I could ever get to here jammed into the *Improvisor's* 76 pages. If you're smart you'll send \$5 today to the following address and find out for yourselves. (from 1705 12th St. South, Birmingham, Alabama, 35205, USA)

*Motorbooty* #3 Much like *Forced Exposure* and *Your Flesh* before it *Motorbooty* is your basic bread and butter rock mag that keeps getting meatier and more interesting with each issue and after only three it is looking like one of the

best around. Aside from the required stories about bands (Halo of Flies, Mudhoney, and the Ramones) and the usual good comics, this issue also includes some not so usual fanzine fare: an interview with painter/comic artist Robert Williams (o.k., I'll have to admit, as I type this months later, and the subsequent Williams interview in *Chemical Imbalance* makes this one of three major rock fanzines with features on the cartoonist in current issues, that it's beginning to look like pretty typical fanzine fare, oh well), a homage to Kathy Acker, and (big sigh of relief) not a record review in sight. (\$2 from POB 7944, Ann Arbor, MI, 48107, USA)

*Murder Can Be Fun* #9/10 MCBF is Johnny Marr's personal obsession. It is also one of the more intriguing and simply entertaining publications our underground has to offer. Though I've heard nothing but praise for this sleaze mag everywhere, I have a hard time putting in words why I think the thing's so good. So let me just run through the contents of the latest issue I have here. The cover story is a bio of dead anorexic pop star Karen Carpenter, an entertaining read for fans and foes and the disinterested alike. This issue's murder feature is the story of Theo Durrant ("The Beast of the Belfrey") circa 1895. Then there's a piece on The Kallikak Family hoax, in which Marr lays waste to the early 20th century psychological study of a "feeble minded" family by Dr. Henry Goddard. My favorite bit this time is Al Hoffs on the scene report of an Ernest Angley revival. Reviews include a detailed analysis of the best and biggest encyclopedias of crime, and an enthusiastic look into *Spy* magazine. Finally, as always, there are brief blurbs on books such as Jim Bakker's *Shower of Blessings* and *Body Snatchers, Stiffs and Other Ghoully Delights* by Frederick Drimmer. Sick fucks who think all this sounds like fun reading should send a buck to Johnny Marr for the latest issue at POB 640111, S.F., CA., 94109, USA)

*Nomadic Underground* #8 It's come a ways since it debuted in Marietta Georgia as a crappy little photo-copied *MRR* styled "scene zine" without really going so far. The direction really hasn't changed a lot despite the D.C. address, offset printing, half-tones, ads, etc. This issue includes fair to middling interviews with Steve Albini and four members of Fugazi. (from POB 18672, Washington, D.C., 20036, USA)

*Not Bored* #14 This zine is still struggling along, and I know it must be a struggle to just barely maintain this dialogue with an undoubtably hostile world. This latest edition pontificates on the concept of the "Cowboy Philosopher" by analyzing some ideas of Greil Marcus, T.J. Clark, Leslie Fiedler and Guy Debord himself. Our editor is up to his usual idiosyncratic tricks and this time I can only vaguely see his point. But the essay is interesting anyway for the perspective and tidbits it offers on the Lettrists, a pre-SI group, about which I've been reading lately. As for "The Continuing Adventures of the Cowboy Philosopher" a "diversion of" an "entire comic strip", I honestly didn't get much out of it, and actually it is several strips combined as one. (from POB 8367, Ann Arbor, MI, 48107, USA)

*On Site* #5 My initial (mostly negative) reaction to the small scale zine arm of unheard (by yours truly anyway) NYC band, Fire In the Kitchen, at first was little swayed by this, yet another issue of that same thing. This despite raves from stalwart members of the zine scene press core, Chris Stigliano, Fred Mills, etc. The longish (purportedly in-depth) reviews by Bob and Jerry of stuff ranging from If, Bwana to Eric Clapton respectively continue to not impress me as being as "on target" as one above named critic/genius has claimed. So ok, anyway, I'll admit they feature bands very few other pubs will likely be getting to in the near future. This time these are the Soldier String Quartet and Big Fence. Then again, since I wrote the previous two sentences yet another issue came along with a note by Bob saying he hoped I'd like this one more. It has an interview with Live Skull, a band plenty of fucking other fanzines have written about. So what's the point? Give me some directions. Get some direction or go every direction at once. Anyway, I haven't had a chance to read #6, so I can't really say much more. Send all your money to Bob Bannister at 230 W. 105th St., #5C, N.Y., N.Y., 10025.



*Option #24* For a magazine that is moving in the direction of a *Spin/Rolling Stone* approach to music journalism, as Bret Hart cautiously suggests in a letter to the editor here, *Option* sure does have some ugly fuckers on the cover. These goofs better learn that the key to success in this biz is a pretty face up front. Readers do not want to see the patchy red sores and bald head that grace this issue's cover. Leave that stuff to *National Enquirer*. (from 2345 Westwood Blvd., #2, L.A., CA., 90064)

*Photo-Static #34* This is a visually appealing collection of images and words that criticize and reevaluate the ideas of various historical subversive art groups/movements (futurist, dada, fluxus, situationist, etc.). Detournement is the theme of this issue. Therefore, virtually everything here was stolen/adapted or used verbatim from other sources including Gustav Metzger's *Art Strike*. Typically, another *Art Strike* is called for and then called into question. In between "detourned" images and graphics there are interesting articles such as Mlekal And on noise, Thomas Wiloch on the relationship between art and the occult, and Geof Hath on nothingness. There are also some reviews of cassettes and magazines. (from Photo Static/Retrofuturism, 911 North Dodge Street, Iowa City, Iowa, 52245, USA)

*Psychic Sex Turnip #6* Is another rockzine I've never seen before with nothing that's too surprising. The anti-drug diatribe (booze is ok because drunks can "wake up in the morning...rinse the vomit out of our hair and go to work.") that leads the reader to believe this is a Moral Majority winglet is balanced out by a "fuck the music biz" piece inspired by the writer's (one Jonathan Puke) visit to a recent New Music Seminar in NYC. Otherwise this has the usual: a few record, zine and show reviews, an interview with a band, some letters, etc... (from 3706 Timberlake Rd. #101, Johnson City, TN., 37601, USA)

*Quimby* (Fall 88/Winter 89 Adults Only Double Erotic Issue) These *Quimby* people are always outdoing themselves. Not surprisingly this latest, largest package is their finest effort to date. The bulk of the issue is the usual (as usual unusual) mixture of art prints, photos, prose and fiction all pertaining to or being examples of Erotic Art. My favorite parts are stories by Anne E. Pluto and Leslie Cauldwell, but there's plenty more good art and lots to read this time. As always, this comes with the inserted *Quimby Comix*, also an all sex issue, and *Quimby Sonix*, a music zine about Boston area bands. (\$5 from POB 281 Astor Station, Boston, Mass., 02123, USA)

*Rolling Stone #549* I bought this extreme rightwing hate-mongering mag in pop culture drag because of the purported interview with jailed Godfather of Soul, James "clean man" Brown. Said "interview" turns out to be yet another smear piece which describes the G.O.S. as "just another crazy dusted nigger". A lot of my readers have stressed the importance of "giving up and coming zines a break", so, for once, I'll heed the advise of the wise and back off on this one for a while. The last good thing I read in *Rolling Stone* was Lester's review of the 3rd Velvets record. Seeing how that was 20 years ago, I'll check back on this magazine in 2009 and let you know how it is progressing (from Seidboard World Enterprises, 75 Bleecker St., N.Y., N.Y., 10012, USA)

*(S)crap #6* Let me take this opportunity for a brief digression to clear up something I've been meaning to get at somewhere; LowLife receives a lot of mail and sometimes I'm not too quick to respond. Maybe its just because I'm an asshole, but I just can't keep up with the constant flood. Some zine editors probably get more mail than I do and still manage to write page length personal notes to everyone that writes in, but I just can't do it. Sorry. So sometimes people send letters and all they ever get from this end is the next issue of LowLife without even a thank you how are you doing I am fine. Such was the case I think with a bunch of people who sent compliments or comments regarding the cover of LowLife #12 that E.K. Huckaby made. Lots of people said

things like, "Dug the sandpaper cover." Well, thanks, but the point I want to clearly state is that it wasn't sandpaper at all. It was roofing paper that E.K. spray coated with this black shit called Automobile Rubberized Undercoating. It was sticky and soft and smelled like a garage and made any other magazine it came near look liked used toilet paper. It was nothing like sandpaper I assure all of you now. For the sake of a comparison check out the cover of this latest long time coming issue of Chris Winkler's art zine. I'm pretty sure that it is sandpaper, Australian sandpaper at that. The stuff that comes between there is also generally worth perusing. \$3 for the "deluxe" cover described above or \$2 for something else to Plutonium Press POB 61564, Phoenix, AZ., 85082, USA.

*Slimetime #22, #23, & #25* These are the first three issues I've seen of this sleaze movie zine in a while, and they are as oozing with information and fun as ever. It is still one of the best places to learn about garbage cinema, new and old. The format is simple: a brief intro followed by reviews in no particular order by several different writers, but mostly by editor Steve Puchalski. Steve knows his subject matter and describes it in appropriate terms. Oddly, he maintains a touch of guilt over the low class status on the art scale of the movies he writes about. Unlike the folks behind *Incredibly Strange Films*, Steve doesn't tell you that these movies are important true art. He tells you they are shit. Which may leave some readers wondering why he even bothers, but I think it is a given we're supposed to already know. (50¢ from 1108 East Genesee Street #103, Syracuse, N.Y., 13210, USA)

*Snarl* Formerly *Smile*, the name has been changed to reflect the spirit of the thing, and in so doing distinguishing this *Smile* from "other *Smiles* being done around the country and the world." Breaking with the group name dictum is a loss of innocence. There's no complacency. No false bliss. The need for revolutionary change is assumed. It's ends and means are spelled out briefly in "Start From The Bottom Up Take Control Now". Other interesting, angry articles include a diatribe against voting and a piece giving evidence that AIDS is the result of Biological Warfare. All of this is worth reading. Entertainment it is not. (from POB 3502, Madison, WI, 53704, USA)

*Soma Addiction* (February 89) The third issue of *Soma* in less than 12 months makes this by far Atlanta's most consistent fanzine, unless we're counting Kerry's one sheets, and we're not. With the smelly silk-screened covers and all the atheist stuff *Soma* has certainly developed a personality of its own. I love all the letter writing and in scene name calling (though frankly this latest issue is sliding in this category), and it's also nice to know there's somebody around to do interviews with bands like Space Seed and Dead Elvis, so no one will ever ask me to do them. (\$1 at stores, \$2 by mail from Thomas, Ga. Tech POB 35526, Atlanta, Ga., 30332, USA)

*Sound Choice #10* So long coming that a lot of people I talk to had given up on this big name among music fanzines, the new *Sound Choice* looks better and is as packed full of information as ever. I wish the reviews and articles were as up to date as the ads, but there is still some good reading here. Without question the best parts are the letters section and the article called "Gathering of the Unruly Tribes and Bent Heads" about weird San Francisco bands. Welcome back and stick around for a while ok? (\$2.50 from POB 1251, Ojai, CA, 93023, USA)

*Swellsville #8* Here's a rock music zine of an entirely different color. Forget about all "the usuals" you'll find in most every other rock zine reviewed this issue and replace the standard three sentence clever putdowns as reviews in your favorite hate rag with long winded analysis and throw out all the rest and you'll have something like *Swellsville*. Editor Jack Thompson has rounded up one surly band of semi-famous Indy rockcrit types including Chuck Eddy, Richie Unterberger, Fred Mills, and Frank Kogan. Only the very brave or indiscriminate are going to want to read through all of their various and sundry rantings. But you'll have a good



time trying. The latest issue has features on Mudhoney, 60s boots, Sonny Rollins, Blood Circus, and House music. (from POB 85334, Seattle, WA., 98145, USA)

*WDC Period #17* The longtime D.C. newsprint thing has gone through various mutations all the while maintaining some vestige of a style of its own. Recently it's been coming out in an abbreviated monthly version. #17 marks the return to a longer quarterly "fanzine" format. As always there are lots of comics, reviews, and diverse features this time: Nina Hagen and the Butthole Surfers. There's not as much Jim Hofmann stuff in this issue as I would like, but the Siamese-twin cover pretty much makes up for that absence. (from Gordon Ornelas 1830 Irving St., N.W., Wash., D.C., 20010, USA)

*Wrong Conclusion #1* This one's a run-of-the-mill punk type fanzine with another Jello Biafra interview and so forth. What really sets this one apart from other zines, I'm not sure, but my favorite thing about it is the grey linen Manson cover. (from 217 Clark St. #4, Bristol VA., 24201, USA)

*Your Flesh #14* Just another rock mag, perhaps, but this one has distinguished itself mightily with the fine Bill Hobson interview with performer/artist Joe Coleman in this new issue. There's also a Killdozer tour diary, where Michael Gerald and company give the lowdown on Europe and give the zine a touch of class. Otherwise there's an interesting talk with Jeff Dahl (Vox Pop/Powertrip), a cool Weiner centerpage spread and the usual slew of record reviews. (\$2.50 from POB 2683 Loop Station, Mpls., MN., 55402, USA)

## B O O K S

Lindley Bhanji: *Cocoon* (Plutonium Press) This is a chapbook of drawings and, for want of a better term, "poems". Close readers of *LowLife* will probably be familiar with Ms. Bhanji's drawings.

Subscribers will remember her drawing on the cover of the *LowLife* Free Tape. The style is hard to mistake. Her bold and oblique figures and faces are not quickly put out of mind. Her style convincingly ties together the primitive to the modern, not so unlike the South's contemporary folk artists. Likewise, her characters suggest by the gape of a mouth, by the swell of the eyes, the harrowing emptiness that lies beyond every level of "reality". We find torment, despair and virtually no hope left.

The poems are also among the best to come this way in a while. Broken almost to the point of lunacy, they sit well along side the drawings Here's one fragment:

teeth in their permanent bite  
this spine must be snapped  
cold icy hands have nothing to hold  
should they be bitten by a biting jaw?  
these hates are growths like shells  
so hard to break in this salty sting

This is the best thing to come out of Australia since the Cannanes. Thanks to the fine folks, well one folk anyway, behind Plutonium Press it is possible to order this stuff without paying overseas postage. So for more, seek this out for yourself. (\$2 from POB 61564, Phoenix, AZ., 85082, USA) - G.T.

Bob Black and Adam Parfrey (ed.) *Rants & Incendiary Tracts (Voices of Desperate Illumination: 1558—Present)* Just knowing that Bob Black (*The Abolition of Work*) and Adam Parfrey (*Apocalypse Culture*) were collaborating on a new book was enough to indicate that something wild was in the works. Still, nothing could have prepared the reader for this.

*Rants* is exactly what the title says, a collection of brief diatribes (many excerpted from longer works) against government, society, religion, morality, rationality, etc. Imagine a target, and there's someone in this book railing against it. These passionate polemics are arranged in, as

the editors admit, an unimaginative chronological order. Seeing how most of these rants are pretty timeless, breaking down all conceivable constraints and classifications, the order of the texts is virtually irrelevant. This is the sort of book the reader will pick up and go at in any direction and find their appetite for venomous prose well satisfied. The vague cohesiveness offered by history's careful order only gives said reader another false god to cling to. They will find him to be a sorry deity indeed. It might as well have been alphabetical for all the sense the order makes.

As is so often the case with the most vital of works, there are those who will perhaps wonder what is the value of a book like this. This is not a book of analytical prose. Careful thinkers such as the SI are abused for their efforts. Plainly, this is a collection of vehement, desperate, hysterical rants, and there is no hedging on the part of the editors. In moments of impassioned abandon human intellect rides with its muse. Or so this book tries to prove that idea. The sympathetic reader of this book is the one who remains unsatisfied by the clear answers that logic and rational thought give us. These answers, most contemporary thinkers have come to agree, are just so much more smoke in the air. The rant is a carelessly aimed bullet fired into the heart of this veil of mist. The ranter is not concerned where their bullets land as long as they draw blood.

The curious reader may wonder, as you reviewer is still wondering, how the editors ever began to make their selection, when the entire history of humankind offers a very wide selection of insane ideologies and schizophrenic world views. The selection is extremely eclectic, cutting across every doctrinal boundary in sight, the whole package does somehow push the reader in the direction of a sort of social nihilist anti-view. Yet, as many anti-statists, anarchists, and leftists as are represented here, there are also racial theorist, monarchist, and right-wingers of all colors. The point is most of these categories become useless under these stressful circumstances.

To attempt a list of highlights would be a futile task. The whole book is a roller coaster ride through the outer reaches of the human intellect in its precise moment of ideological orgasm. A short list of a few names will suffice: William Reich, Artaud, Ezra Pound, Kerry Thornley, Gerry Reith, Hakim Bey, Timothy Leary, Celine, Ayatollah Khomeini, Anton La Vey, Octave Mirbeau, de Sade, Max Stirner... Just a collection of some better known of the ranters included. Some of the most exhausting verbal assaults in this book are from forgotten or unknown men and women going out like the Challenger in one tremendous blaze of truth disrobed. The easily offended will get offended. The cowards will leave shaken. But the seekers of knowledge on the tattered edge will find this book a rewarding experience. (\$9.95 from Amok) - G.T.

John Ellis: *The Social History of the Machine Gun* (John Hopkins University Press) When one friend saw me carrying this book around, they asked "Why are you reading a book about guns?" It's a question I find difficult to answer with assertion. Actually this book was originally published in 1975 by Pantheon books but is now again available in this new paperback edition. It is not so much a book about guns as a book about the stupidity of human kind in its advance toward so called progress, the triumph of technology.

Outlining the development of this terrible machine, Ellis also tells of the industrial revolution leading to the arms race, nuclear war, travel in space, etc. This innocuous killing machine that turns living beings into mincemeat represents a crucial reference point on the way to everything else that developed around it and beyond it. As is often the case when true histories are told, as opposed to the kind of history children are taught in school. Nobility and honor have no place in the tale, except as laughable meaningless symbols of outmoded ideals. History may be dead, but Ellis manages to tell a new story out of that old dusty pile of words.

The bloody gun came into existence with no fanfare to speak of, and it never really came into its own until racist colonialists used it as a way of keeping the natives at bay and thus mowing down thousands in the process. then



during World War I, in a four year standoff where millions of young men fell dead in the mud before the blaze of the gun, the advancement of technology was shown in a horrible frozen moment. Month after month the boys marched nobly off to die before the machine gun fire in an effort to maintain the valor of long outdated military practises. And of course the military men were the last to notice that things had changed. The "glory of war" was gone by the wayside. What was left was steel and cold death.

I wouldn't want to spoil the work too much more by glossing over in a few paragraphs what Ellis takes a hundred and fifty pages to detail. There's a lot of interest here. Especially funny is the chapter "A Symbol of the Times" which describes adaptation of the "tommy gun" by gangsters during prohibition, and how that led to the gun becoming a symbol of this modern day hero/rebel/law breaker. If you hate guns as much as I do, then you really should read this book. If you don't hate guns, I think you're pretty fucked up. - G.T.

Mel Gordon: *The Grand Guignol* (Amok Press) This intriguing history traces the French "Theatre au Grand Guignol" which is the link between Poe and Mary Shelly's *Frankenstein* and the horror movies they inspired. Readers with a gruesome appetite will find much to nibble on in these pages, but they might be left with their hunger unsatisfied. Gordon's study is certainly not academic, in fact it seems a bit rushed. The actual telling of the theatre's history only takes about 25 pages. Then there's the rather obvious chapter on the theatre's influence and a too short section on stage tricks. The bulk of the volume is made up of short plot summaries of 100 Grand Guignol plays divided according to themes such as "Cuckoldry", "Suffering of the Innocent", "Vengeance", "Insanity", "Suicide", "Mutilation", "Guilt", "Infanticide", and so forth. After that comes what'll probably be the highlight for many: photo-documentation of three Grand Guignol plays. Finally the book closes out with a very

interesting essay by inhouse playwright André de Lorde and three complete scripts, also by de Lorde.

Undoubtably the best thing in Gordon's book is the photos and illustrations. Once readers get into the text and plays themselves they might discover that the theatre of fear and terror was not as terrible and fearful as wished for. After all these were mere plays. But as plays go, none could get much worse (read: better) than, say, Leopold Marchand's "Orgy In the Lighthouse". This one ends when two sailors "in a religious frenzy" over the death of one of their mothers, take vengeance on the two prostitutes they have just fucked. They slash the throat of the first woman and throw her from a lighthouse tower. They pour gasoline over the other and burn her to death. Then they pray. Lisa Suckdog should look here for new scripts! (from Amok )-G.T.

Stewart Home: *The Assault On Culture (Utopian Currents From Lettrisme to Class War)* (Aporia Press/Unpopular Books) History is being rewritten and rewritten again faster than it transpires. To rely on the popular body of information that is force fed into our collective consciousness at every turn is to accept the fate we are being dealt day in day out. Our only recourse is to look under any stone unturned. Stewart Home's book is another overview that attempt to uncover such a stone that hides this current running through contemporary culture and as the title suggest attempts to strangle said culture in the process.

Home calls the various groups Utopian. His claim is that in the 20th century "those adhering to Utopian principles have worked between art, politics, architecture, urbanism and all the other specialisms that arise from separation." This "doctrine of separation" is the thread the author uses to loosely bind such diverse polemics as the College of Pataphysics, the SI, Fluxus, the Yippies, and Punk. Home also usually finds that it is the down fall of most of them when they become too specialized Groups like Group Zero are

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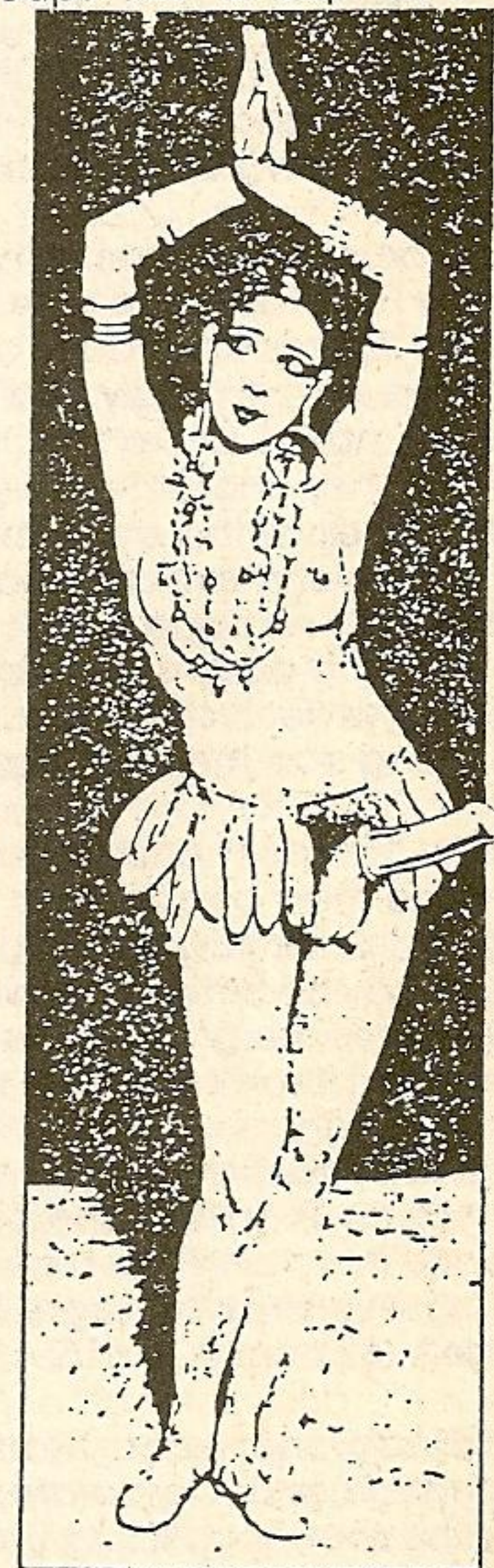
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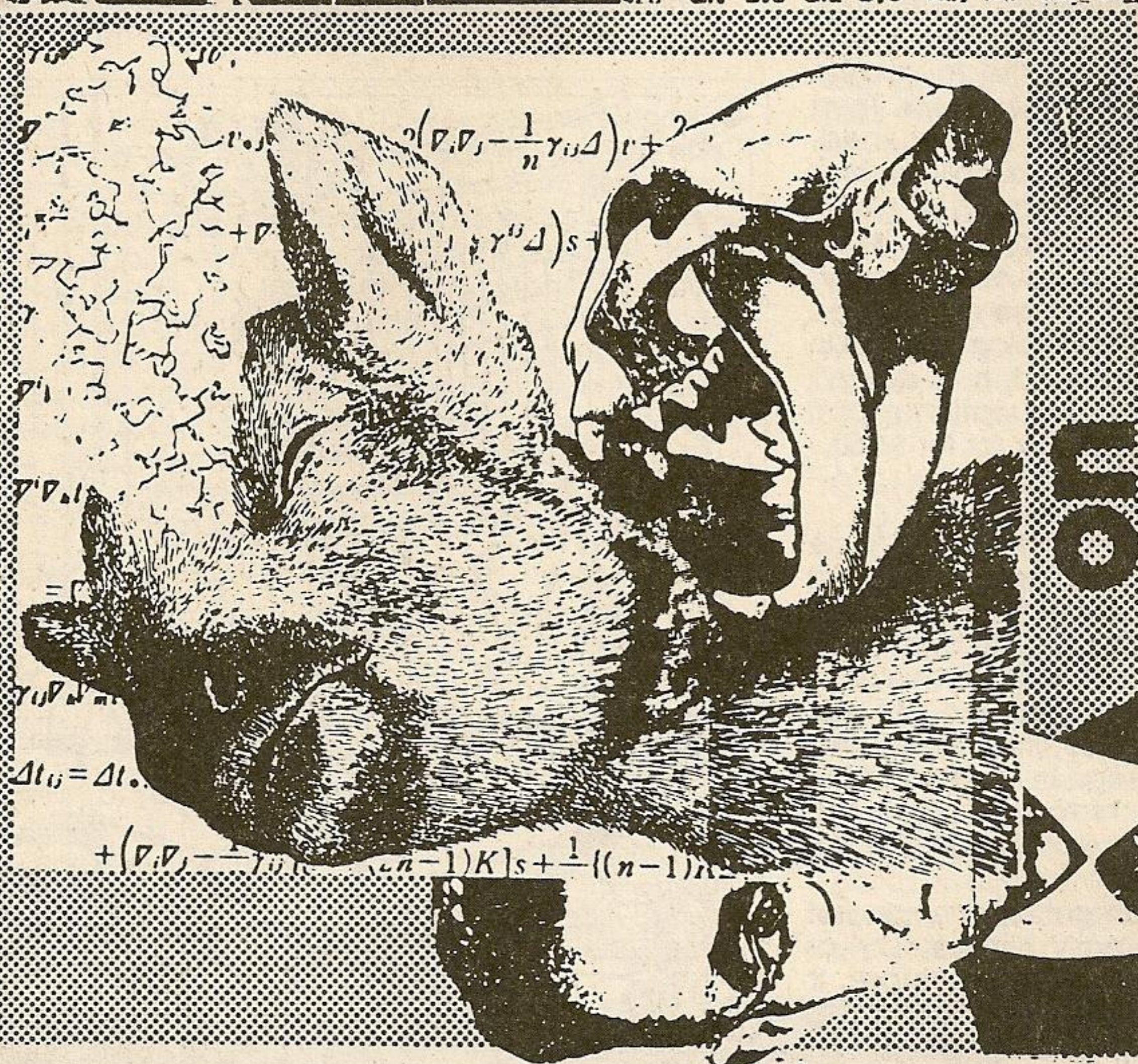
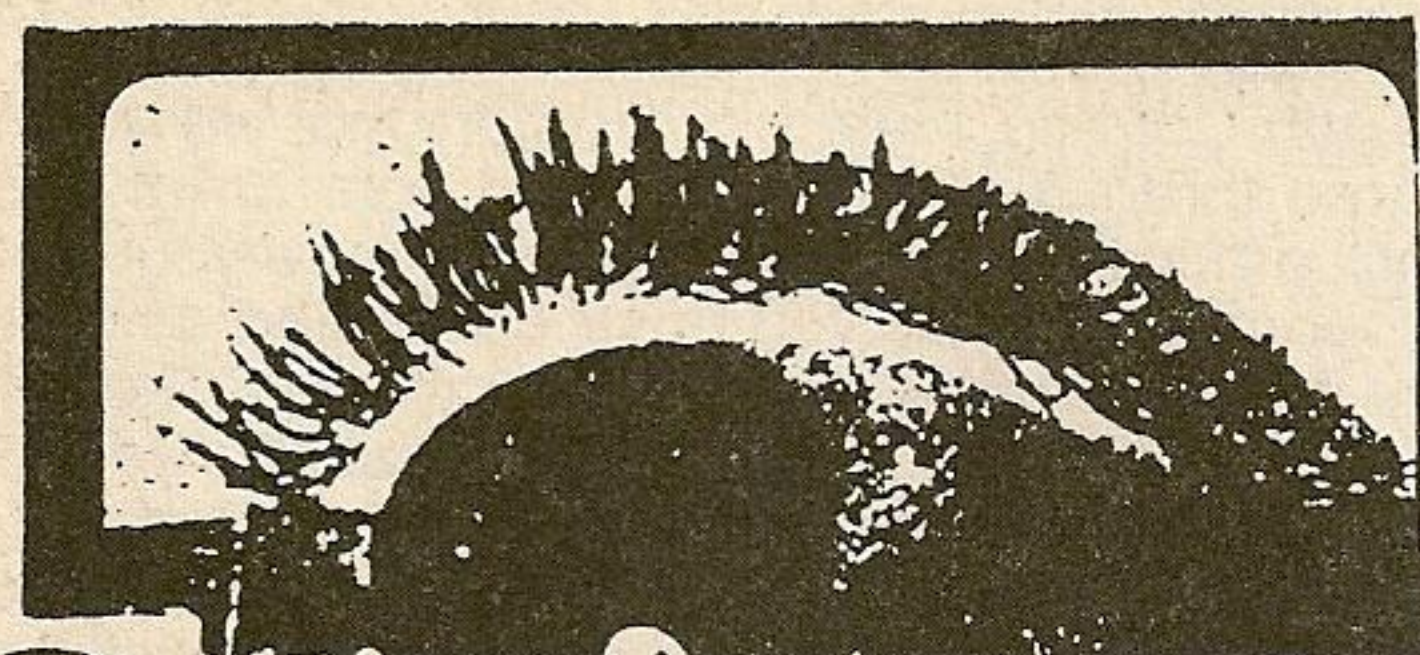
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omitted "because they limited their activities to art."

There is very little doubt that Home would not claim a great deal of objectivity. He certainly does sympathize with the currents documented, but he also sees and discusses their ultimate "failure" that looms over their small successes. Home's thesis is more didactic than that tendency might at first lead the reader to believe. He has an argument to make, and he finds evidence to prove his contention at every turn. So then, the book is as much critical as it is historical. A great much of the force of his argument hinges around his belittling of the Situationist Internationale, and its various closely related precursors.

That Home is some color of Utopian himself comes as not surprise. That he would come down hard on the failures of the fathers is likewise in character with the nature of the beast. However, it is surprising to find him concentrating so much of his energies in one direction, what I like to call Sit. Bashing. Home makes a great deal out of the group's (SI's) failure to maintain his (their?) doctrine of separation, as they became more and more strictly political (or anti-political) in their efforts. Within the context of Home's argument, The SI and its precedents were foolishly off the mark, but Home fails to show that the Utopian conception necessitates separation. His attempts to derail the long dead SI are oddly vindictive. From Home's perspective, then, your reviewer is probably a pro-Sit. Sorry. But a guy who thinks Crisis and the Apostles are two of the most significant bands of the Punk movement obviously has an oddly focused world view, if it is a cool one at that.

This book doesn't go into great detail on the groups examined, which will often leave the reader wanting to know more. It is this concise quality of the text that keeps it very readable even when the topic is pretty cloudy. The curious reader is encouraged to dig deeper. The "Selected

Bibliography" offers a convenient place to begin this process. Home points to the need for further scholarly research. - G.T.

Elliott Leyton: *Hunting Humans: Inside*

*the Minds of Mass Murderers* (Pocket Books: TRUE CRIME) Remember a few years back when that asshole wandered into a McDonalds in California and started blowing bullet holes into everybody's shit? I can still see that picture on the TV set; the cops sitting there watching, looking pretty goddamned stupid for a bunch of fools who got the training and know how to deal with this kind of nonsense. The cameras capturing freeze fried still shot frames of people of people dropping to the ground in a bloody fury of silence, the sounds of bullets leaving furs mixed with ugly moans and screams from people feeling the pain. It was the way everybody looked so helpless, lost, confused. It was the way they let it happen, like Jews hopping on trains they knew went nowhere, that pissed me off. Nobody had any balls. If just one long shot player on the floor took a chance, knocked the holy fuck out of this wildman gone crazy, if only one cop disobeyed orders and took a pop shot through the asshole's head, things just might have been different. But everybody sat there, waiting for some kind of divine intervention, acting like there was no way in hell this could be some kind of real life action going wrong. That scene fucked with me a lot. It hung in my head in a series of pictures, sounds, empty spaces demanding some kind of an explanation. That same scene fucked with Leyton, and he took on not only the McDonalds wildman (James Oliver Huberty) but Ted Bundy, David Berkowitz (Son of Sam), Albert Desalvo (The Boston Strangler), Charles Starkweather (fool with a 14 year old girlfriend who took to killing because he didn't know what else to do under the circumstances),



and David Essix (who considered the world his enemy). I like Leyton because he tells you early on this isn't worship, that these fuckers were murderers, assholes, and making them into heroes is bullshit. He's interested in knowing why, in knowing what broke when to make these fools get out of hand. Each of the major chapters takes on one mass murderer at a time. You can see where some fool ass editor bopped in and inserted headings and formats. The chapters begin with a biographical study, some background to set up the next feature, mainly THE KILLING TIME segment. This is where the gore fans will masturbate with shit eating grins, where they will thrive on a reality most people would rather keep off of the bottom of their shoes. THE TALKING TIME deals with quotes from the murderers, with words and motivations from first hand assholes. Then the motivation is sought after, rocks are over turned, histories are reread, the breaking points and philosophies scream off the page. After the heavy handed chapters which focus on individuals are shredded there is an excellent overview, an excellent round up of who, why, where, and when. The book reads like the type of thing you were looking for when you took those psychology classes in college. It gets down in there, looks around, and doesn't beat about fruitlessly. It's good reading, educational, and thought provoking. What more could you ask for for \$4.50. - Lawrence Oberc

Ruth Richardson: *Death, Dissection and the Destitute* (Routledge & Kegan Paul) Gore hounds can have fun with all the harrowing details outlined here about Bodysnatchers and the Burke and Hare murders, but this is quite a scholarly work that takes its subject matter very seriously. Richardson has no particular polemic to pound, so what we get is a multi-dimensional study of a period in time, centering around one moment in time, the passage in England of the Anatomy Act. Basically this is a history of how the development of the science of anatomy effected the life and afterlife of every man.

In the early pages Richardson gets at the mindset of the people of the period late 18th/early 19th century as regards to death, the afterlife and the human corpse. It probably goes without saying or reading this book that the rather slight developments of science and the so called "age of reason" had little to do with the way ordinary people looked at things. And have we really come so far today?

Perhaps the question gets at why this book seems so relevant in 1989. The second third of the book discusses how the Act came to be passed. In the process a lot of the corruption and dishonesty at the heart of the politics of the era are exposed. We see an outline for the more massive web being woven to this day. Again what hasn't changed is as interesting to read about as what has changed. It is also in these middle chapters where we get some of the more sordid details of the various crimes that helped to turn the issue of the trafficking of human corpses into an act of parliament.

Finally Richardson wraps up her work examining the consequences of the act. There are many. This is an expensive book, but one that offers many hours of fascinating reading. - G.T.

Ted Schultz (editor): *The Fringes of Reason: A Whole Earth Catalog* (Harmony Books) Remember stalking the wilds of your neighborhood as a kid? Walking home in the dark, your head rambling like a hot rod vehicle, filled with monsters movie nightmares and blurred photographs of extraterrestrial goblins from flying saucer magazines? Remember how sudden sounds, a piece of wood snapping in the shadows only a few feet away, hard concrete tapping footsteps creeping up behind you, a scream of anger, laughter, or fear, off in the distance, too far away to make sense of, made your feet walk fast? Those spontaneous bursts of adrenaline, spine tingling rushes of excitement, faded with age. Logic solidified into concrete realities, the world began to make sense, and fear took a back seat to responsibility. But somehow that curiosity, that need for roller coaster winds blowing through your hair,

tracks clacking at your feet, still remained even though common sense reared up its ugly head and warned you to

Now, thanks to the folks who brought you *The Whole Earth Catalog*, there is a directory that will reach out, grab those threads of paranoia from your childhood, tie them into a hangman's noose, and convince you that the logical concrete shelters you have assembled as an adult are only an egg shell waiting to be cracked. The articles alone are worth the price of the book. New Age opportunists, businessmen who take advantage of the spiritual salvation of the wealthy, are shamelessly exposed. A brief history of the end of the world fanatics, complete with updates and revisions, drift by in the muddy waters that



flood these plains. Photographs of human beings who have decided, for one reason or another, to spontaneously combust, are provided for those with iron clad stomachs. But this is just the tip of the iceberg, the olive floating on top of the martini. There are pieces on perpetual motion machinery, illustrations and explanations of hollow and flat earth theories, reviews of grocery store tabloids, overviews of the popular flying saucer conspiracies, and even a strong critique of the hundredth monkey nonsense.

So put away your copy of Ivan Stang's *High Weirdness By Mail*. It's a good year or two out of date, those characters have faded into the woodwork, and it isn't nearly as interesting. Forget about religious tracts from The Church of the SubGenius. They are only amateurs at this game. Go straight to the researchers who brought you *The Whole Earth Catalog* and know you have the truth. This book is up to date, extremely accurate in describing the various kooks and characters that wander this universe, and a joy to read as long as nobody is looking over your shoulder. This is THE book to explore the things your college professors left out of the classroom. This is THE book to restore those paranoias and neurosis you thought had vanished with age. - Lawrence Oberc.

Jack Stevenson: *The Squeaky Fromme Scrapbook* Here is an item that'll be sure to delight the sick minded everywhere. Manson enthusiast, Stevenson has gathered together what is perhaps everything he has (doubtful) on Squeaky Fromme, in the way of clippings and photocopies from books, and stapled them together under one cover.



This has everything about Squeaky you might have already seen in Jack's *Pandemoniums* as well as *The Manson Files* to which Jack contributed. The "new" materials mostly just a few clippings. If this sounds like something you'd be interested in you know it already. The rest of you should have skipped down to the next review by now. Obviously, I think like this a lot, or I wouldn't be writing about it. (from POB 483, Elmira, N.Y., 12180, USA) - G.T.

## Recordings

**Abecedarians: AB-CD** (Caroline CD) They're noteworthy primarily for being the first US band signed to Factory Records and on this career overview you can hear 'em shooting for that goal. The Factory-derived echo and Joy Division approach to rock 'n' roll really couldn't miss that goal though to their credit the Abecedarians aren't quite as doom-bound as you might expect. This CD-only release has their first single, a chunk of the *Eureka* album and most, if not all (I lost the press release), of their most recent album *Resin*. Note to audiofiles (not me): It's also got more hiss than any other CD I've ever heard. Definitely nonessential, but if you think these guys might at all be worth your time this is the way to hear them. (from 5 Crosby St., N.Y., N.Y., 10013, USA) - Lang Thompson

**A.C. Temple: Blowtorch** (Blast First L.P.) Simply put, this is one of the three or four best new rock albums I've heard in the last six months or so. Perhaps that bodes grim on the state of rock, but in light of everything else, these melancholy Brits are positively uplifting. *Blowtorch* does not sound like the most original set of songs ever pressed on to a 12", but it's a gritty, loud, relentless record that'll stick to your skin like a leech. Lest anyone is thinking this is the product of that famous garage so many bands emerge from, think again! As often as this stuff does manage to hit below the belt, it does so with a certain finesse, a, dare I say, polish. It is almost

a *Sisterly* sort of record, and still it sounds better than anything I've heard since at least the early seventies from that band Bob Bert used to play with. The outright S.Y. cops (from "Kill Yr Idols", from "White Cross", etc.) don't bother this sucker one bit. Does your conscience bother you? I thought not. (from 262 Mott St., Room 324, N.Y., N.Y., 10012, USA) - G.T.

**Agog: Putting Legs on a Snake** (Spagyrlic cassette) Very impressive work that along with The Tape Beatles: *Subtle Buoyancy of Pulse* and Due Process' *RRRadio 12-15* has restored my faith in the sheer life-affirming righteousness of sound collage. Burn the false musique concretists; these folks are the Real Thing. Though I'd be hard put to pin down any specific structure, Agog isn't really throwing together random sounds. There's a sense of purpose to their material even as bits of radio voices or electronic drones or strange instruments fly around. Without being hyperactive, the music is constantly moving, offering new sounds or different emotions (this is one tape that's actually funny in spots). Vibrant, focused and disrespectful; how could I not recommend this? (from 19241 Kenya St., Northridge, CA, 91326, USA) - Lang Thompson

**G.G. Allin: Freaks, Faggots, Drunks and Junkies** (Homestead L.P.) The music is too slick for me, but the vocals are real good, ripped all up and tough. I was wondering what G.G. could do next, and from listening to this record I guess he is documenting his decline. Not a talent decline, but a human decline. Everyone else that's into destruction either dies right off >SNAP<, or else they get all healthy and pop. But G.G., he takes a long time to die, like his whole life. (Editors Note: According to a recent photo-copied form letter I got from G.G., he will die on stage somewhere in New York City at midnight on October 31st, 1990) But he's more serious about it now. Something is happening to him. He feels bad: "I'm going crazy... I'm blacking out all the time... No time... Something ain't right... nowhere else to go... going down..." I think G.G. Allin the Rapist (the "go-go-go!") is dying, and

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Records*



G.G. Allin the God is taking over. At the Nov. 5th New York show everyone piled onto him trying to sing his songs touching him, yelling at him: "Shit! Come on, G.G., you gotta shit!" And G.G. just screamed: "Leave me alone! Leave me alone! Get away from me!" G.G. is too good for everyone around him, and too bad for everyone else. I don't know why he feels the need to destroy himself for people he doesn't care about. It is kind of tragic, but maule-wowie, watching him play sure makes my panties wet! (from POB 800, Rockville Centre, N.Y., 11571-0800, USA) - Lisa Carver

Anschluss: *The Mobile Plumb Bob* (Swill Radio L.P.) It would be difficult to tell what kind of music this is, if the dictates of a record review included classifying. From the name of the band on to cover art and inside to what this actually sounds like, this record is its own genre. Anschluss is two guys (Rick Vrabie and Scott Foust) with only a bit of help on a couple of songs. I guess the music is mostly electronic in origin but knowing that gives no hint of what this sounds like. It does not resemble "electronic music" as we know it and is only experimental by reference. Most of this is melodic if askew and hardly pop but ought to be. There's not much to compare this to, but it is a little like Nature Protein Biscuit without Grace or drums. If more independents would put out records as different from most bands on Homestead or SubPop as this one, the music world would be a confusing place indeed. (from 121 Leverett Rd., Amherst, MA., 01002, USA) - G.T.

Arcane Device: *Feedback Music 3* (RRR 2 7" E.P.s) David Meyers is a smart guy who wears funny glasses, and this is the third in his "Feedback Music" series, the 1st two being L.P.s on Recommended and Generations Unlimited. Some rather lovely and austere moments are reached on the way to setting free the electrons that dictate the modern life of humankind. One of the two discs was recorded live. The other is more studio work. I tend to prefer the studio stuff, but it's hard to find fault with anything here (from 151 Paige St., Lowell, MA., 01852, USA) - G.T.

Arcane Device: *Engines of Myth* (Recommended L.P.) This is the 1st in Meyers' series and, I think, also the best. Meyers says he'll gladly accept the title "folk artist", and I'll buy that. He points at Russolo, but I keep thinking Ravenstine. This is all raw electronics, and the mood is not calm though occasionally a bit dull perhaps. Then sometimes Meyers will get into a rhythmic phrase but things usually quickly fall apart. On "Pink Porous Rock" this procedure turns to satire. Always Meyers sounds like he's having fun, especially when it gets really wild. "Prayer Cloth" slices flesh just how I want it cut. "Lathe" is his shimmering finest moment yet. The silk screened cover only completes this top notch package. This is only one of the highlights of the generally excellent Recommended catalogue. (\$12 from D. Meyers, 228 Bleecker St #8, N.Y., N.Y., 10014, USA or write to Recommended at ReR Megacorp, 19-23 St. Savior's Rd., London, SW2, England) - G.T.

Arsenal: *Manipulator* (Touch & Go 12" E.P.) Shattered fuzz guitar, thudding drums, distorted vocals; this is definitely in the Big Black/Head of David vein. (Editor's Note: Which probably has something to do with the fact that some guy that used to play in one of those two groups now is (in) this one) Not that I care: originality hasn't much interested me ever since I learned that the Beatles didn't write "Long Tall Sally", and this sounds pretty cool just the same. Sharp use of found vocals, guitar repetitions and such means that maybe they're doing something different after all. I'll just wait until their album to figure it out and keep playing this in the meantime. (from POB 25520, Chicago, IL, 60625, USA) - Lang Thompson

Band of Susans: *Hope Against Hope* (Blast First L.P.) I read a lot of record and tape reviews (mostly records actually) in fanzines, not something I'd recommend others to do. (Stop what you're doing now.) I think it's beginning to taint the way I read, the way I write, the way I think, the way I hear music.

After a few dozen reviews of a record such as this one that came out months ago, I'm left with this weird variety of tinnitus resonating in meaningless snatches of zinespeak. Not to suggest, what these writers say could ever give the reader a shred of evidence toward what an actual piece of music sounds like, but when I turn around and attempt the same stupid thing for the zillionth time, it's hard to hear my own voice amidst the piping of all those other critical geniuses. "Style" becomes imperative in a medium lacking value as analysis, history, theory, or (how do you say?) criticism. Do I get away from the subject at hand? No. If, as I'm suggesting, critical writing has a hard time ever delivering an image of or representing a musical work (or any work), then the only subject matter left for criticism is criticism itself. There it lives in a safe cell. This is not a new or very interesting idea, and again I'm just mouthing what others have already said. As for the L.P. *Hope Against Hope* by the band called Band of Susans, I like it a lot. (from 262 Mott St., Room 324, N.Y., N.Y., 10012, USA) - G.T.

Beme Seed (demo cassette) Kathleen Lynch of Easturn Stars, Butthole Surfers, Liviliing fame is back again with a bunch of goofy looking guys backing her up. Of the above three band names, this one unfortunately sounds most like the one everybody's heard of, though Beme Seed has even less direction. Kathleen is up front being Gibby now with her effect boxes and her rants, but she is still Kathleen somewhere beneath the mix. As such she is a singer/performer unlike any other. It is that pure guts and brawl Kathleen that rises up out of the torrent of echo that makes this worth hearing. The band is pretty nondescript in a loose acid flavored vein, but they really aren't too bad. They could get much better with a few weeks of practice. I missed the Georgia shows opening for the Texas Holes or somebody, so I don't know the truly cosmic experience this must be live when you're so fucked up you can't think clearly. Write for spiritual advice to 9 Stanton St. Apt. #2B, N.Y., N.Y., 10002, USA. - G.T.

Better Than Death: *Swimman* (Lost L.P.) You can spot a Lost Records band from at least 30 feet away. Better Than Death (btd) is Michael Lytle's "rock" band. Lytle put out some of the most amazing records of the decade with George Cartwright. This one is nothing at all like those, though it too is pretty good. The central member of btd is Mark Howell (guitar, voice). He writes most of the material, but this music is fun in much the same way that most other Lost bands (Bump, Mofungo, the Scene Is Now) manage to be fun. (Fish & Roses is a different story. Chain Gang is yet another one.) These guys play their instruments with confidence without selling their souls to the demon technique. When I listen to this record the following artist come to mind (don't ask why): Beefheart, Glorno, King Crimson, MX80 Sound, V-Effect, Krackhouse... there are others. It doesn't matter who they are. (from 346 East 13th St #7, N.Y., N.Y., 10003, USA) - G.T.

Big City Orchestra: *Animal Religion* (Ralph cassette) According to the liner notes this is "composed entirely of animal sounds", and if I didn't suspect this bunch of being a bit more honest than your average fanzine editor, I'd think this was some kind of hoax without humor. I reaffirm my belief in their honesty, despite what sounds to these ears like distinctly human mumbling, but people are animals too. The abundance of noise that sounds like jet planes, vacuum cleaners, Fripp & Eno records, and paper jogging machines, I will attribute to massive synthesis and processing. The results of all that are well worth listening to and continually demand more attention when forced to be background music. Every tape I've heard from Big City Orchestra forces a reevaluation of the genre I try to put them in, and that's got to be a good thing. There are seven two legged animals credited with the production of the music on this tape. Two of those are the two that make up Crawling With Tarts. If I haven't gotten your attention yet you must be reading the wrong review. (from 109 Minna #391, S.F., CA., 94105, USA) - G.T.



Stewart Bizarro: *Lunatic Genius* (Flying Pig Products cassette) Stewart Bizarro is a mad beast, and all his friends are mad beasts too. Just these really weird people that always seem to be in the same room. I don't know how they got there but there they are, with the 210 cassettes they've made stacked in drawers. Someone gave Stewart a recorder walkman, so he took it on a rollercoaster and yelled at girls. And then he took it around the yard and the house and showed it all the things. Then someone came in and started banging on an acoustic guitar, and then came in five or six howlers, and they began a-howling. I've never seen a real Stewart Bizarro cassette with a price and a name on it, but if you send him a blank tape, he'll fill it up with a compilation just for you, with a beautiful hand-crayonned cover. Stewart also makes videos and does performances. (for trade from 65 Burford Road, Forest Field, Nottingham, NG7 6BA, England) - Lisa Carver

The Black Orchids: *The Lunatics Ball* (Cryptovision 7" EP) Four pieces of garagesque rock, riff-running guitars, noisy solos, rough vocals. Except for the unimaginative "Mayfly Blues," it fills in those times when you need lively unpolished rock and don't much care where it comes from. You may not remember the songs when it's over, but life is like that sometimes. (from POB 1812, N.Y., N.Y., 10009, USA) - Lang Thompson

Chemical People: *So Sexist* (Cruz L.P.) I thought about reviewing this without even listening to it but figured why not. First of all, the best parts of this record are obscured by dots. Look at it, you'll see. Wimps! So what are we dealing with? Pop-punk ala Descendents or one of those aggregations. And it's on Billy Stevenson's label, and he produced it, hmm... fortunately, this doesn't suck like the All album. The songs are generally pretty good, the band sounds o.k., but... the production is a bit thin for me. Don't want them to sound too much better than All, do we Bill? If you miss the early Descendents (and you should), *So Sexist* will make you feel a lot better in the meantime while Milo's doing whatever he

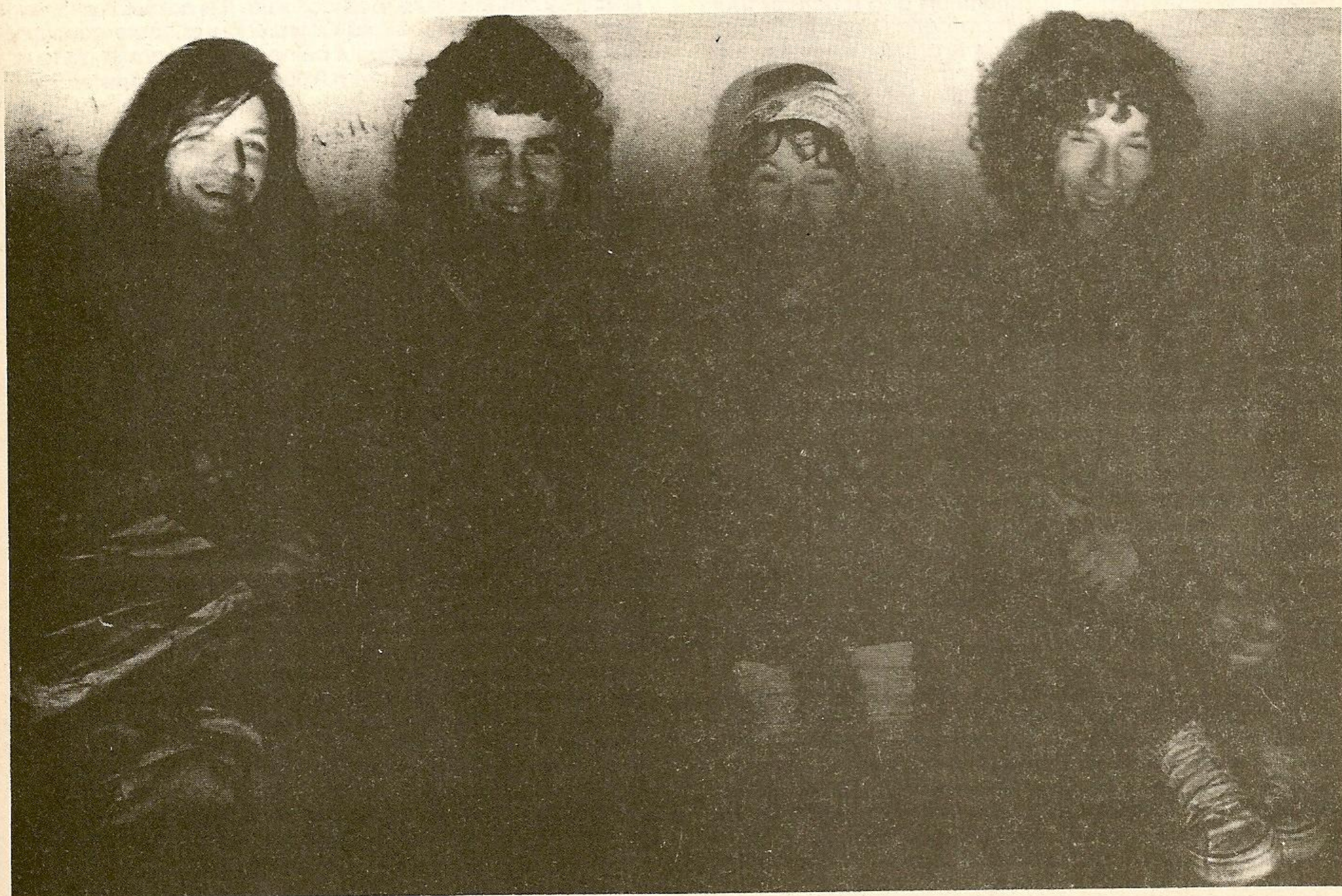
does and bad All and live Descendents records are being released. (from POB 7756, Long Beach, CA., 90807, USA) - Jon Kincaid

Jeff Clayton & the Slimegoats: "Oogum Boogum"/"Brother Freakinstein"/"Conspiracy"/"Cock On the Loose"/"Walkin' Dead"/"You Can Touch Me There" (7" E.P.) Not as pure a slab of heavy punk as Clayton's regular band, the AntiSeen, this is still o.k. by me. There's no Joe Young here and the guitar force does suffer a bit, but the Slimegoats are punk rock for people who believe (as I do) that *Dictators Go Girl Crazy* is one of the essential early punk records. Yes, this bunch is just that serious. "Brother Freakinstein" sounds as if it could be about G.G. It's probably not, but Jeff does sing G.G.'s "Cock On The Loose". This record is dedicated to the memory of Divine, and it should be approached with that spirit. (from Jeff Clayton, Route 3, Box 239E, New London, N.C., 28127, USA) -G.T.

Common Ailments of Maturity: *Smoldering Lunchbox* (L.P.) Boston's Common Ailments of Maturity are a three-piece who dabble in more of a feel-oriented approach to songwriting than placing any emphasis on relevant relationships to lyrics. Not that they're just tossing words into the wind or drifting off to Cocteau airiness, C.A.M. just ooze their environment. While not exceptional, through their fusion of found tapes/sampled voices and the influence of Mark Stewart, the Fall, and Suicide, C.A.M. come up with a fairly entertaining, if not earth-shattering, album. This group is not as well known as other Boston celebrities like Boston or the Lyres. *Lunchbox* won't aid in a bid for name recognition, but it's a low budget, low frills, decent entertainment value. Not exactly my cup of tea (what is?) but also not something I would make fun of someone else for buying. (from POB 51, Boston, MA., 02141, USA) - Jon Kincaid

Costes: *Enfant Du Deguelis* (cassette) Everyone says they can't take Costes' music for more than five minutes at a time. They say it's because it's so awful, but really it's because

Beme Seed





It crosses the line of created music, and enters the realm of the actual creation process, the creator's mind AS HE CREATES. And it is hard for most people to be in their own mind, never mind another man's! Only a person very curious about the awful things in the human mind will listen to Costes' music. Only a person who would shut himself in a room for ten days to "see what happens." Only a person who takes drugs not because it feels good, but because they want to find something new. Only a person who makes experiments out of his friends' feelings. Only a person that can overcome his fear at the first horror he finds, and will go deeper in. Only this person will listen to Costes' music.\* This is particularly so in "Papa encule moi" and "Je suls mauvais". They are too long to be songs. The singer forgets us (the listener). He is concerned only with his own attention span, not ours. The aesthetic pleasure of the song ends after the first three or four minutes. The next twelve minutes are only for those who need to know. For those with the cold, constant urge to PICK BRAINS. Someone once asked me if I could have three wishes what would they be? I said:

1. to be invisible
2. to be able to fly
3. to be able to enter others minds

Costes' music allows me to do all three. Costes' music: urgent-urgent-urgent. Coming out like vomit. Coming out from a man who has just been told he has only ten hours left to speak, and then his vocal cords will be cut. (\*This is only true in Costes' French releases. His songs in English are bright and happy like a hot-fudge sundae.) (from 13 rue de la Pierre Levee, 75011 Paris, France) - Lisa Carver

Cruel Frederick: *The Birth of the Cruel* (SST L.P.) Gee, I love free jazz as much as the next person, but something about this seems a little redundant. There's a couple of Ayler tunes, Ornette's "Lonely Woman" and, to prove their sense of irony, "Moon River" and "Amazing Grace". Like the garage rock from the same time, free jazz was a bursting out, a testing of freedom and while it's still on going (check out recent Cecil Taylor, Sonny Sharrock and Sun Ra LPs for proof), it seems a little backwards to recreate the earliest style of free jazz: acoustic with conventional instruments and structures that wouldn't entirely lose a sympathetic bopper. Those significant reservations aside, this is a fairly solid exercise. These Gypsies can certainly play, and it beats the hell out of any garage revivalists. Great song titles too: "Jukebox in the East River" and "That Damned Music". (from POB 1, Lawndale, CA, 90260, USA) - Lang Thompson

The C\*nts: *A Decade of Fun 1978-88* (Pravda LP) Despite the name (their asterisk), this isn't punk like the Sex Pistols but punk like the Seeds complete with Farfisa organ (which doesn't make them much like the Seeds, after all, but you get the idea). At least they don't do any cover versions of obscure garage tunes. One side from out-of-print seven inches, the other all unreleased material, and, except for sound quality, there's not much difference so those of you big on artistic growth might be let down. The rest of us had no expectations and got just what we deserved. (from 3728 N. Clark St., Chicago, Ill., 60613, USA) - Lang Thompson

Da Da Id (demo cassette) This is a local band I have never bothered to see live. About the best two things I can think to say about the band is that George (Moto) Nikas is their manager and Debbey (Freedom Puff) has occasionally played drums for them. When I told Benjamin (Freedom Puff, etc.) I sort of liked this tape he recoiled in horror saying he hated them. At close inspection it's difficult to point at what I like about them. The sound recalls the worst of the Athens dance party bands, not OH OK not Love Tractor but the Side Effects. None of their songs seems so hot either, and they are dragged down even further by the "it might just as well be a beatbox" drum tracks. Still, there is something charming about these twerps. It is like if Beat happening went completely to shit and there was still something uplifting buried below the heap. - G.T.

*Die Rache 7* (Sound of Pig cassette) Maybe the tape title is actually 7, and that's not part of the group name. Art doesn't thrive on clarity. Maybe criticism shouldn't either since it's hard to know what to say about this tape. One piece sounds exactly like the sort of electronic ostinato my TV set produces late at night on off-channels; pretty dull. Another piece has a very clear bass synth up front and then lots of noise and banging way, way in the background, an interesting reversal of the usual eat-my-cacophony attitude. There's lots of other stuff, too, but it tends to fade away. I just don't know... (from 28 Bellingham Lane, Great Neck, N.Y., 11023, USA) - Lang Thompson

*Dugan & Cavity* (cassette) The 2nd tape from local guitarist/sound manipulator Geoff Dugan is another excellent tape by a local artist. Side One is mostly just solo guitar, but you would probably never guess that. Geoff processes his instrument live to achieve an array of moods. I really like the dismal throb of "Silence". Side Two is Cavity, a one shot live set with Geoff, Andy Pierce and Kevin Haller. It is a powerful performance. I believe this was all improvised but the three work together so well I can imagine the entire thing was scored. From rage to recline and back to rapture this doesn't sit still in one guise. That way things stay interesting. (\$4 cash or trade from Geoff Dugan, 379 Milledge Ave., S.E., Atlanta, Ga., 30312, USA) - G.T.

ERL: *Creepin' Mujetderreh* (ERL 7") A great ugly single unlike anything else around, this continues to baffle and amuse. As crazy and confused as Caroliner Rainbow, yet displaying a distinctly different set of values (i.e. type of psychosis). The record sounds good at any speed, but I'm suspicious about 33 rpm. The name of the band could also just as easily be Creepin' Mujetderreh for all I know about this duo(?). Not to be missed, but, of course, will be. (from 418 Madison Ave., Albany, N.Y., 12210, USA) - G.T.

The Ex: "Rara-Rap"/"Contempt" (7") It doesn't come any better than this. Two pieces of chunky, no-compromise political postpunk from an incredibly prolific Dutch band. Definitely not the usual "political" stuff. It is not just that they support firebombing of Shell Oil warehouses, these guys are angry. They're serious without being pious. All profits go to a prisoners support group. (from POB 635, 1000 AP Amsterdam, Holland) - Lang Thompson

Fearless Iranians From Hell: *Holy War* (Boner L.P.) So it's another concept album about the Ayatollah, and it's still speedmetal, and it's still dumb, and I'm not sure why I'm wasting the time on reviewing it or your time on reading it (*Editor's Note: OR MY TIME TYPING IT!!!*), except to say that even though there have been a lot of other records released like this lately, this is not pre-Sonic Youth Thurston Moore. (from POB 2081, Berkeley, CA., 94702, USA) - Jon Kincaid

feedtime: *Cooper S* (Rough Trade L.P.) As most readers are probably aware, feedtime is a great rock band. At least most readers are probably aware that we think they are great. For those miserable amoebas who don't know anything about feedtime, please take note. The band has been together for about ten years, and so far they have three long playing albums. They put out the first one on their own in Australia, and it's pretty hard to find around these parts. The 2nd one, called *Shovel*, was released by an Australian independent label but eventually picked up by Rough Trade and is easy to find almost anywhere. It is also amazing and not to be missed, so don't. The third one is this one and likewise is easy to find. It's an all covers album, sort of in the tradition of *Pinups*, though I wouldn't be surprised if they'd never heard ole carrot top's English covers classic. Actually *Cooper S* is more diverse, including a standard, an obscure Australian rock band, the Beach Boys, Nancy & Lee, the Ramones, etc. and so forth. But regardless of the source material, feedtime have a knack for making the songs they play into their own. After you hear these versions of these





feedtime—someone said they broke-up, damn!

songs you might not be satisfied with originals by the Animals, the Stones, the Stooges or whoever, and I realize that is not easy to believe. The feedtime method is to strip a song to bone. They then add extra muscle and go from there. The result inevitably is some powerful noise, powerful, yet simple, basic, rock. Once you've heard feedtime you'll know what I'm getting at, and you will not have to read any more fucking reviews of their records. (from 326 6th St., S.F., CA., 94103, USA) - G.T.

*Fugazi* (Discord 12" E.P.) The day Fugazi played in Atlanta, one of North High Ridge Apartments' four 36 unit buildings burnt near to the ground. Many individuals were left homeless. Many lost everything they had. There are those that suspect arson. I happen to know that all four bald headed members of this band were in the complex just moments before the fire began. I'm not trying to point the finger at anyone, just thought it was worth mentioning. I missed the Fugazi Atlanta show because I was afraid to go out while the fire continued to more than smolder a few feet away from my own building. A friend told me they were "reggae" crossed with "noise". "Gee, I guess I didn't miss much." Seven months later as I listen to the first Fugazi record, reconstruction of the burnt-out building is almost complete. I should mention that my friend's simplistic characterization of this rock band was about as far off the mark as possible, despite an occasional similarity between the singing of one of the singers and the singing of some guy who was in the famous reggae band, the Clash. I don't really hear any "reggae" or "noise" on this record, just very well played rock. Songs like "Waiting Room" and "Burning" still send this reviewer reeling after a couple of dozen plays, and regardless of good intentions, I barely know what MacKaye and company are singing about. If not for a lyric sheet I glanced at once, I wouldn't know at all. It's curious to consider how perhaps the two best American rock bands to "debut" in '88 (at least in front of my face they debuted) are this one and the one lead by that other punk rock cliché, Steve Albini. Both these little men have taken what they've always done o.k. and turned it into something better, something more full, something that rocks on its own accord without the accompanying literature. (from 3819 Beecher St., N.W., Washington, D.C., 20007, USA) - G.T.

Tom Furgas: *Music for Keyboards 1-5/6-10* (C-60) If you have ten keyboard compositions of thirty minutes each and want to put them on tape what's the best thing to do? Obviously, it's to combine five on each side of one tape. That's what long-time hometaper Furgas has done here. What he loses in compositional coherence is more than made up by the pleasures of Cagean collisions and randomness. The synthesizer and Casio sounds sometimes blend but more often crash together in strange patterns, a sonic kaleidoscope that never stops moving. Heard for long stretches, though, this gets a little tiresome so it's probably best to listen for ten or fifteen minute blocks and just enjoy. (from 1840 Paisley Rd #3, Youngstown, OH., 44511, USA) - Lang Thompson

Greige Travall: *Summer of Apathy* (Bangaway cassette) Just in time for summer almost, although they're referring to the last one. This is so incredibly diverse it would be difficult to tackle in 3 pages of 8pt. much less a tiny blurb like this one. Over the course of 22 "songs", these two (and only two!) explore as many or more approaches to music destruction. This is generally noisier than some previous efforts but even more eclectic. This band is only slightly less prolific than Lisa Suckdog + co., so you know they don't waste too much "expensive studio time" on retakes and the like. They don't need to. (from 1460 Cornell Rd., Atlanta, Ga., 30306, USA) - G.T.

Half Japanese: *Charmed Life* (50,000,000.... etc. Watts cassette) Finally two and a half years after a full page back cover ad in *Forced Exposure* announced its release as "the fulfillment of a 12 year promise", Cosloy reviewed it in *Conflict* and *Iridescence* went under, Half Japanese's famous "lost" L.P. is actually available. Of course, it is also available as a big beautiful L.P. with a full color David Fair cover. I bought the little ugly cassette version with the same cover in red and black because it was advertised as featuring 10 extra songs. These include five alternate takes of songs on the L.P. and five different songs. Unfortunately, one of the five alternate versions listed on the cassette cover, a second version of the title cut, "Charmed Life", is not actually on the tape. It isn't even listed on the tape itself. Count them twice, that makes only nine extra songs, buds! I wouldn't



have believed it myself, but you can't even trust Half Japanese. What a bummer! Well, the tape's not bad anyway. I've heard Half Japanese do better, and I've heard them do worse. I really like all the songs Don Fleming sings this time. (from 5721 S.E. Laguna Ave., Stuart, FL, 34997-7828) - G.T.

Robert Hollis & Christopher Swartz: *11x2* (Perimeter L.P.) Georgia's, hell, America's coolest instrument builders release their third and best album. Not the clicking and clanging improvisations you might expect from home-built instruments, these are carefully structured pieces (with some improvs, sure) that run from jazz art rock to tense drones to percussive raveups. No matter how conventional it threatens to become, there's always an edge of peculiarity, something that sounds just a little strange, keeping it a bit off balance, which is the best place for it to be, anyway. A lot of the people reading *LowLife* probably know these guys so let's spread the word to somebody else, ok? (from POB 28882, Atlanta, Ga., 30358, USA) - Lang Thompson

Honeymoon Killers: *Take It Off* (Buy Our Records E.P.) The 5th 12" from these long time rockers is as good as anything they've done, though I think some member or members of the band said side one sucked because it was too slow. Both sides sound fine by me, though they're too short. What the Honeymoon Killers do is not what anybody would likely call innovative or particularly original, but it's always been a lot of fun. These days they do what they do with skill and steady hands, as seeing them live will testify. What they do is play nasty grungy gross-out no frills rock and roll a lot like so and so have done before them and continue to do beside them. (from POB 363, Vauxhall, N.J., 07088, USA) - G.T.

John Hudak: *There Only Confusion Is True* (Cassette) Hudak takes a moment, not usually such a pleasant moment and extends it over the course of one side of a C-90. All the tapes I've heard by him have followed this same basic pattern/formula, though I don't know that all of the many he's put out do so. In another's hands this practice would surely lead to boredom or just nowhere. In Hudak's crafty paws the trick seems to work everytime. The constraint becomes art by force of attention. On this cassette Hudak gives his renditions of "Heaven" and "Hell", leaving us wondering what happened to paradise. The sound on this tape is potent, painful noise that is sure to modify any environment it muscles its way into. Outside the high powered improv of Borbetomagus, Tinnitüs, and Möslang and Guhl, I can't think of any contemporary music that strikes with the force of this harrowing noise. *There Only Confusion Is True* was recorded right here in this mortal realm, the weary planet earth, and it couldn't happen anywhere else. (\$4 or trade from John Hudak, 4706 Hazel Street, Phil., PA., 19143, USA) - G.T.

Jandek: *On the Way* (Corwood L.P.) And with the bat of an eye out pops another one. The musician continues to grow, but to counter any possible accusations of "sell out" perhaps, this L.P. is one of his most rough cut ever. Also it's one of the most diverse. Every Jandek record is a letter as personal as it is anonymous. Listening to a new one I get the feeling I should not be listening at all. It is as if someone found a stack of tapes, someone never meant to be duplicated much less heard by others, and released them without permission. A pile of water stained old photos packed away with the cassettes then will do as cover art. Merely listening is an invasion. To study, analyze, and ponder over these private soundtracks is quite immoral, and the listener comes away thusly dirtied. For those who can't stop looking into the face of suffering, for those who just will not turn away from the aftermath of the fatal accident, for those who just can't find it in themselves to say no to the the unknown, Jandek is your

folk music. Where this music comes from ordinary laws of time and space don't make much sense against the ultimate abyss of pain, hopelessness, and loss. I've always secretly doubted the chronology of these records. There are so many cross references between the various LPs, it would take a Borges character to begin to chart the patterns of meaning. The music exists in a pool, a solitary moment, when a mouth opens and not so silently screams:

You've seen me now at least fifteen times as I count 'em

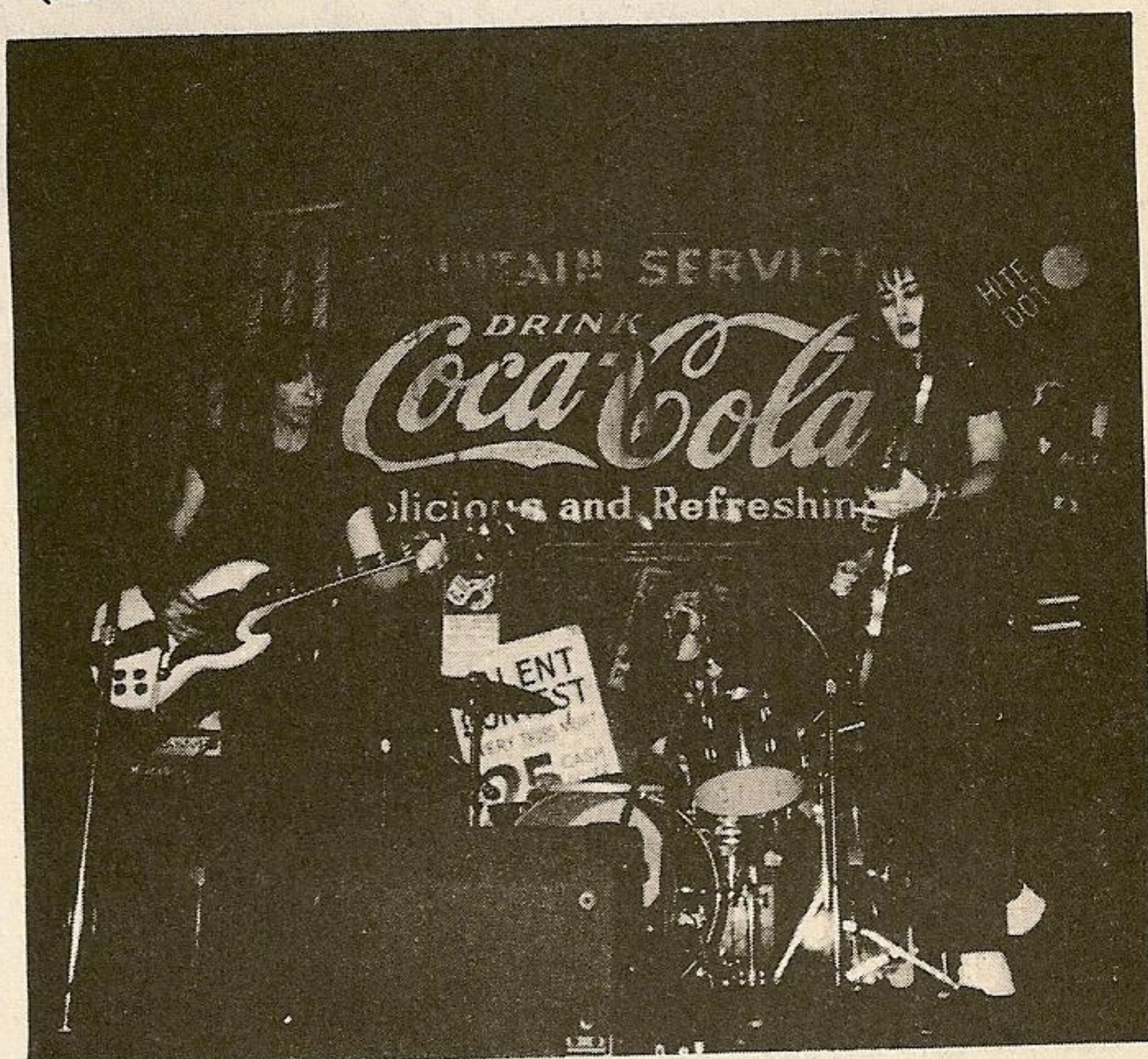
Don't you think that's some kind of seniority

Jandek is the final folk artist, the ultimate post-modern. Jandek's records are exquisite jewels of art. Quantity over quality brings us firmly back to quality pure and simple:

It comes every century

Wrap it up

(from POB 15375, Houston, Texas, 77220, USA) - G.T.



Honeymoon Killers

Henry Kaiser: *Those Who Know History Are Doomed To Repeat It* (SST L.P.) In which guitarist extraordinaire Kaiser sells out, sort of. Side one finds our hero running through several actual songs, distinguished only by the odd choice of material. "The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance", "Ode to Billy Joe" and the theme from the "Andy Griffith Show" are campy material done fairly straight by a woman vocalist and with a minimum of guitar, whacked out or otherwise. The novelty value fades after a couple of plays except for the cover of an impossibly obscure Grateful Dead song that actually benefits from the sedate treatment. On side two our hero stretches, and spaces, out a bit with an almost half-hour cover of the Dead's "Dark Star." Pulling together labelmate's Glenn Phillips and the rhythm section from Bill Frisell's band, Kaiser almost redeems himself for the first side. "Dark Star" manages to keep pace with its creators and gives all the players plenty of room to roam around. The CD has a different take of "Dark Star" and several Beefheart covers that probably should have been on the L.P. (from POB 1, Lawndale, CA., 90260, USA) - Lang Thompson

Kinothek Percussion Ensemble: *Adventure, Volume 1* (Audiox L.P.) Borrowing a concept from the silent film era when a catalog of film music was made available to theatres, KPE is



creating a series of albums along similar lines. this one is for, surprise, adventure films. The pieces seem a little too self-contained and aggressive to make effective soundtracks, but I'm not using them for that purpose anyway; I'm just listening. KPE finds a way between simple repetitions and fully developed songs, creating a unique and intriguing sound that's introspective and modest but certainly won't fade into the background. It's mainly rhythmic (percussion, y'know) and with enough horns, flutes, piano and the occasional synthesizer to keep it moving in other directions. Using instruments from other cultures gives the music an exotic feel, but KPE wisely avoids trying to duplicate any ethnic music or even the smug boredom of self-styled world music. There's a piece with tabla and sitar that is about as non-Indian as possible. A first-rate album and it's time for *Volume 2*. (from POB 146778, S.F., CA., 94114, USA) - Lang Thompson

Fred Lane and His Hittite Hot Shots: *Car Radio Jerome* (Shimmy-Disc L.P.) When I lived in Tuscaloosa, Fred (not his real name, incidentally) was a common sight, bringing his impressive red mustache to all sorts of culturally wayward events. To the best of my knowledge, though, he never played live which is too bad because that would have been a sight to witness. In the tradition of great American eccentrics, Fred can't stop throwing off all sorts of peculiar, half-baked ideas and has a deep attraction to the purest schlock. This album is a relic from an alternate universe: nightclub crooning complete with horns and piano, lyrics from the Andre Breton School of Automatic Writing and occasionally horn players loosed for wild free blowing. The reason that this works, I suspect, is because Fred isn't condescending to Vegas lounge music but genuinely enjoys it. His previous album was too precious and scatterbrained but this has some teeth. They may be dentures, but what the hell! (from JAF Box 1187, N.Y., N.Y., 10116, USA) - Lang Thompson

Lime Spiders: *Volatile* (Caroline L.P.) Now on their third American label, Oz's Lime Spiders return with another L.P. that strives and reaches its goal of unexcitability. At best sounding like the Hoodoo Gurus and at worst sounding like the Hoodoo Gurus, *Volatile* pretty much just lays there. If they put the data in a computer that would compose the archetypical college "rock" album, *Volatile* might very well be the result. It's got that hard-edged guitar enough to make it truly "alternative". It's got kind of hooks and rock danceable beats. It's got a guy named "Mick Blood". He might as well be "Adam Ant". The last two lines of a song on this L.P., "Strange Kind of Love", read: "I've got a headache, had quite enough". My sentiments exactly. Supposedly, only their worst stuff gets released in the states. For their sake, I'd hope so. (from 5 Crosby Street, N.Y., N.Y., 10013, USA) - Jon Kincaid.

Live Skull: *Snuffer* (Caroline L.P.) These six fast powerful songs are all great, and I find myself playing this record often. Six songs full of that thumping clanging wailing wall of Live Skull noise could hardly fail to excite me and this does, plenty. Those familiar with Live Skull will know what to expect, and they will not be disappointed by this sixth (at least) record. Those unfamiliar are only hurting themselves if they don't give this one a listen after having missed so many previous opportunities. I understand that snuffer is the last recording with Marnie Greenholtz on bass, and I will miss her strong and nimble fingers demanding rhythmic movement of the listener with their relentless patterns, the way they do here. The singing is often gut-wrenching and can remind me of Laura Fucking Carter of the now defunct (too bad) Bar-B-Q-Killers at times. I wonder if Thalia Zedek and Laura Carter are the same person? Maybe that's why Live Skull have not played here or the Bar-B-Q-Killers had to break up. Who knows? One of my favorite songs is "Was" which starts slow, beautiful, ringing and then takes off like a hardcore song or a bat out of hell or something, and I have to catch my breath everytime, no shit. And then there's "Chair" with a bass line I cannot get out of my head (or fingers) although it's been months since it barged in. "Word" is a bundle of

barely controlled energy that will not allow sitting still and "Straw" is slower and melodic and features several voices. Although I've heard Live Skull records for 4 or 5 years now, I have not had the opportunity to see them play, and I've read that live is the way to experience this band. Finally, they are scheduled to play in Atlanta soon, and I am looking forward to seeing them even if they don't play any of these songs, which they probably won't because they have a new bass player and a new record I haven't heard. I guess we'll find out about the singer then, won't we? (from 5 Crosby St., N.Y., N.Y., 10012, USA) - E. McG.

Logos: *Pneumafoon Project* (Igloo LP) The Pneumafoon Project documents an instance of instrument building on an unprecedented scale. The "Pneumaphones" (or wind gods) are these rather bulky machine-sculptures made of tubes and reeds and whistles and so forth. These are joined together by tubing to the various large inflated cushions (lungs) which are sat on or manipulated by humans to create the wind that makes the whole set up work. The project is presented in three ways. The first way is as a Concerto for traditional organ and Pneumaphone, which is documented on side A here. Another is as a "solo" concert for Pneumaphone, which is presented on side B. (The word "solo" is relative because it requires a number of humans, here merely three, to stimulate the lungs of the system and another (Godfried-Willem Raes) to "direct" the flow of air by a system of valves, etc.) A third, perhaps theoretically more intriguing, way of presenting the project is as an installation for audience participation, where everyone is invited to roll on the cushioned lungs of the system. Opportunities for giving live presentations of such an enormous project do not come often. Therefore, Logos decided to document it on this record. The LP comes with a printed program of explanation by Moniek Darge and photos of all the pneumaphones. (from Logos Foundation, Kongostraat 35, B-9000, Gent, Belgium) - G.T.

Ludichrist: *Powertrip* (Combat L.P.) They've got a new lineup and a more metal sound but these guys are still one of the best hardcore speedpunk metal bands around even if nobody seems to know they're around. Not that it'll make a convert from an unbeliever like *Master of Puppets* or *Dimension Hatross* would, but still *Powertrip* will nicely/rudely fill whatever cravings for this stuff that you might have. There's even a Robert Williams cover for those of you who like everything *Forced Exposure* tells you to (though this will certainly never be mentioned in those august pages). (from 187-07 Henderson Ave., Hollis, N.Y., 11423, USA) - Lang Thompson

E. Lunde/Big Body Parts: *N3845 W10452.5/7.5* (RRRecords/N4300 W8752 2-7" EPs) This silk-screened, bagged, and boxed 7" set is another successful, difficult work from Lunde, whose theoretical concerns will puzzle most everyone. However, the recording principle, Lunde's "erosion processing", is actually a basic, hands on technique where sounds are recorded then rerecorded and so forth till they are distorted/eroded into something else. This is applied to a rocky Colorado terrain where it mimics the earth's own process of erosion. The documentation of this is used as a reflection on the body's own erosion, breakdown, aging process. What Lunde is pointing at is something much larger than what he is capable of getting to in this limited medium/format. Consider this a doodle then on the way to a bigger, final statement in this area of investigation. Through the processes of sound erosion Lunde has gotten down to the bare rock under the surface of ordinary "musical" concerns. Likewise, his interests have strayed further from the ordinary concerns of musicians, even the sort of musicians who are his labelmates on RRRecords. Therefore, Lunde is turning more toward the written/spoken word, yet another subject for erosion, and more and more frequently his "instrument" of choice. Is this not another erosion on Lunde's part? The dim squiggles on the offwhite page refer to nothing nobody. If I've failed to describe what the sounds on this record actually sound like, blame it on the



powerlessness of these scratch marks. Write E. Lunde/N4300 W8752 at POB 92181, Milwaukee, WI., 53202, USA. A video of this recording/presentation is available from Big Body Parts, 3031 E. Platte #2, Colorado Springs, CO., 80909, USA. This and other E. Lunde recordings are also available from RRRRecords, 151 Paige St., Lowell, MA., 01852, USA. - G.T.

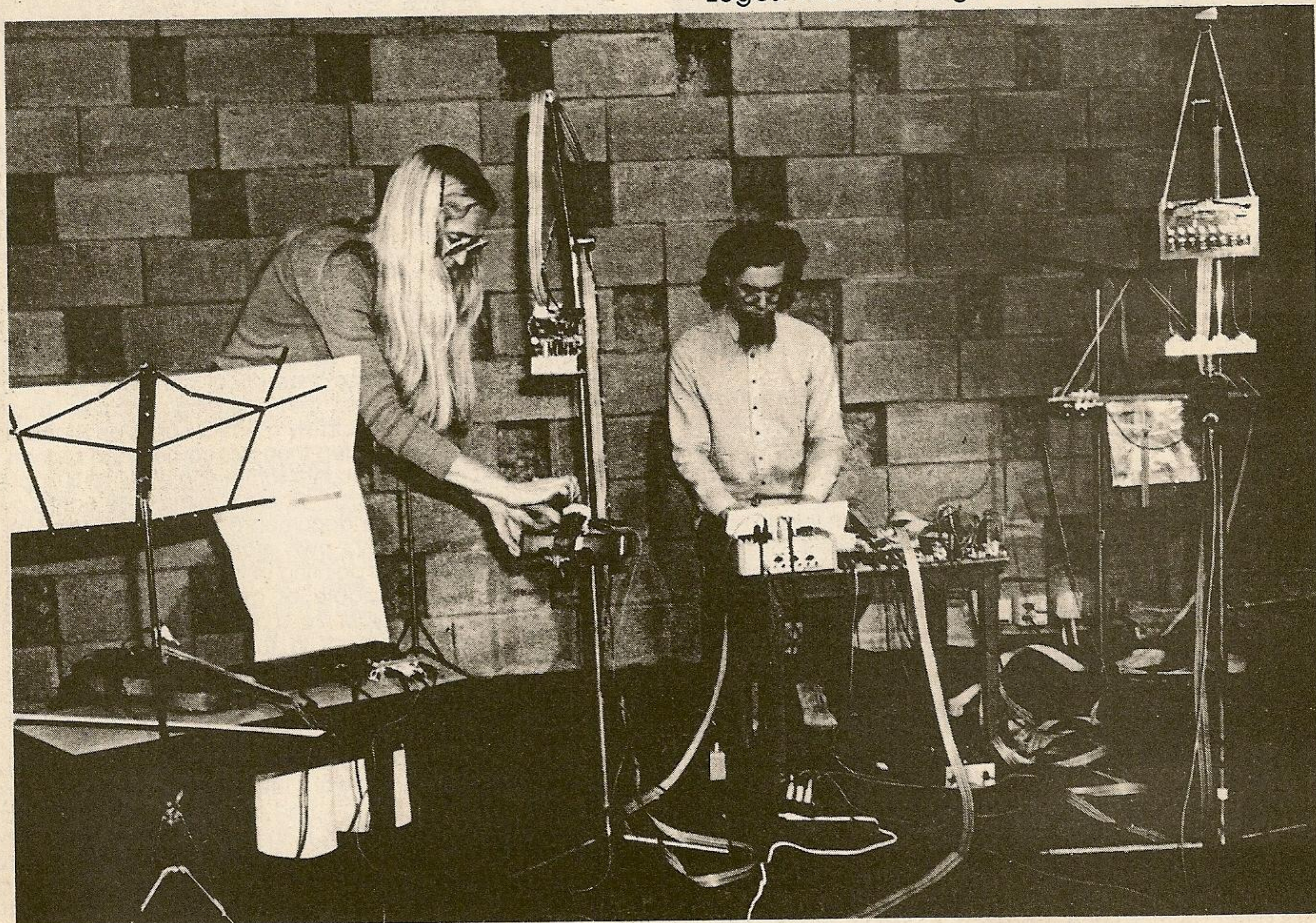
*Machine Gun* (MU LP) With its generic graphics and dull cover, I almost passed this one up until I noticed that somebody was credited with "tapes" and Sonny Sharrock guests on guitar. Good thing too because this is the toughest, loudest free improv I've heard in some time, comparable to Last Exit and not just because of the Sharrock connection. Basically a quintet using standard instruments (sax, drums, guitars), Machine Gun pulls no stops in their search for liberation and though plenty of people have been doing similar stuff for a couple of decades or so, this still sounds brand-new. Needless to say, Sharrock'll pop the fillings out of your teeth and though he's only on one side, everything else is up to that standard. Recorded live, naturally. (from 111 Fourth Ave #5A, N.Y., N.Y., 10003, USA) - Lang Thompson

*Mans On Control* (5 song demo cassette) This is Mitch (Omagod) Foy's "band". The first two songs ("Baptist Preacha" and "Old Grampy Stubbs") are rather timid exercises in Peach of crap. They are not the most original attempts at sound manipulation/cut ups I've heard this month, but because it is fast paced and gritty and not particularly referential, this is some fun noise to get lost in over coffee. The third cut is from Mitch's gig at the Mud Shack, already legendary a few hours after it was over, where Mitch screams and shouts over a band or something and sounds a lot like G.G. Allin at the Cat Club. "Nomi Naomi" somehow falls somewhere between the coldness of the tape noise stuff and the blood rush of the live song. "War At 8" shows a similar approach to the other studio work but with more industrial strength. - G.T.

*Master Slave Relationship: Lubricious Love* (RRRecords L.P.) Well, after reading a couple interviews of her, I thought Debbie Jaffe was a horrible, frightening woman. But after listening to this record, I realize that's not true. She's a horrible frightening SPIDER. d She says (on top of lame-ass synth) "Oh, you were so tall, your face was... so beautiful... you came up behind me... your cock was so big, so hard..." If these men are so big and beautiful, then why are they coming over to Debbie? She's no prize, and she pretends to be whipped, but how can you whip a woman so tall and muscular as Debbie? What a beast! I hate her. (from 151 Paige St., Lowell, MA., 01852, USA) - Lisa Carver

Roger Miller: *Oh* (Forced Exposure L.P.) Former Burmaman turned piano key manipulator returns to the six string format to have a blast and see what he can come up with. The resulting L.P. is one of the finest of '88 and easily the best F.E. record I've heard (and no I never heard that Dream Syndicate 7"), easily outshining those giveaway 7"s I have heard and cherished (or had stolen!). Almost single-handedly (with a bit of help from Peter Prescott on bass), Miller damages a number of long overdue traditions and formulas and never fails to hold my attention over the course of this mostly instrumental record. Along with a few others (Donald Miller, Davey Williams, Lee Rinaldo, two or three more), Miller is actually trying to do something with guitar beyond what the Branca/Chatham/no-wave contingent achieved ten years ago and maybe even what Derek Bailey, Hans Reichel, Frith, and Beefheart's bands did fifteen to twenty years ago. Lest we delude anyone with our past tenses, most of the above named guitar music originals are still going strong, but Roger Miller, with this release, proves he's right up there with the pack. Not that this is an extremely serious record. The fun of it all is part of what puts life into the better songs. If you leave the room you're more likely to be laughing than crying. (from POB 1611, Waltham, MA., 02254, USA) - G.T.

Logos: Moniek Darge & Godfried Willem Raes





**Morphogenesis: MG1** (Generations Unlimited cassette) This is wild, edgy free noise that involves the listener in a whole new kind of rationality. Put this with the best and most difficult of current practitioners of this "form"—Borbetomagus, Muslang & Guhl, Shaking Ray Levis, Mnemonist—not a place for the timid. It's industrial music, flayed and laid out on the anatomists' table. One of '88's major releases is this generic looking cassette on this sometimes unexciting E-music only label. Believe it. (from 199 Strathmore #5, Brighton, Mass., 02135-5210, USA) - G.T.

**My Dad Is Dead: The Best Defense** (Homestead L.P.) Mark Edwards has put dignity back into the concept of gloom in rock music, and he's done so without the use of skulls, eyeliner or Martin Hanne. Mark is the singer/songwriter/musician that hides behind the catchy name, My Dad Is Dead. This 4th L.P. is a collection of outtakes and leftovers that somebody thought deserved to see vinyl. I'm happy to have this in my collection, if only for two or three songs. "Anti-Socialist 2" and "Pile It On" are o.k. But it is "In the Morning" that distinguished the side and the whole record, if I had to say so, and I do. It's a chilling, perfect lyric and a really good way to start your day off right with a smile. (Write MDID at 1725 E 115th, Cleveland, OH., 44106, USA or Homestead at POB 800, Rockville Centre, N.Y., 11571-0800, USA) - G.T.

**PBK: Die Brucke** (cassette) PBK rides the pulse with Martin Rev. The music finds its way to places most people would not ask to go. Louder playback makes for more cheerless fun. Everything but the sound sits still. And the sound moves closer and closer. PBK is one of the most talented members of the current American tape underground. Don't miss his noise. (\$5 or \$7 overseas from 115 W. 33rd, San Bernardino, CA., 92405, USA) - G.T.

**PBK: Ases/no** (cassette) It's not difficult to guess what this is like after hearing a few other PBK cassettes: more whirl and blur. The man will not let up, not until the listener gives in or shuts up. At points the rhythm takes a fevered pitch, though funk this is not. Even when the music shifts into a lull, and never for long, the listener is not lulled (fooled). So make no mistake, this is aggressive electronic music which is good brain food for a certain state of mind. It will probably send the rest of the world running in fits of panic to escape from the noise, and everyone is entitled to their own opinion. This is the sound of stress. This is the state of unrest. This is the sound that comes long after the silence. I like it. (from 115 W 33rd, San Bernardino, CA., 92405, USA) - G.T.

**P. Children: P. Ch 3** (Vacant Lot/RRR L.P.) I haven't heard the previous two releases (a cassette on Sound of Pig and a 7") of this "performance group". I also didn't see the *Testament* video, on which there is a P. Children piece. That's it for the have nots. I have heard this album, and, in this context, that's enough. It is a very diverse and sophisticated collection of electronics, sound manipulation and industrial musics. At times ethereal and environmental, at other times tensely rhythmic or just noisy, the music is as eclectic as the processes used. Comparisons be damned! This music is as good as any music of this variety being produced in the U.S. today. (from Vacant Lot Records at POB 606, Red Bank, N.J., 07701, USA or RRRRecords, 151 Paige St., Lowell, MA., 01852, USA) - G.T.

**Phillip Perkins: Hall of Flowers / Flame of Ambition** (excerpts) (Fun L.P.) For those of you not into cassettes (and aren't you ashamed?), this is a vinyl release excerpting two tape releases. Perkins is a real "composer" that even had some site-specific, sound collage-type stuff in the recent New Music America in Miami (part of which is included on his fine new CD). The point, though, is that this isn't sneering snobbishness but friendly and pleasantly iconoclastic and still not often something my roommates would think was music. But it is and excellent music at that. Some of you might want to know about the rumor that Perkins is actually one of the Residents though this album sounds nothing like that. (from 45A Wright St., San Francisco, CA., 94110, USA) - Lang Thompson

# THE FROGS

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Phantom Tollbooth: *Power Toy* (Homestead L.P.) Dave Rick is an incredible, virtuoso guitar player, leaving in the dust all the more famous creeps in other currently more fashionable NYC-type bands. These guys are actually from Connecticut, I think, not a very fashionable place to be from at any time in recent memory. Anyway, despite his obvious technique, Rick is no mere technician. In frenzied non-stop parades of every trick in the book, he manages to maintain the dignity of real style. In so doing, he seldom fails to surprise this reviewer on any given song. With this focus upon the guitar player I don't mean to take credit away from the other two guys in Phantom Tollbooth, because they keep up with Rick at every turn, and that's pretty impressive. Basically what this band does is run circles around itself. Often it sounds like the guys are showing off, and I can't blame them. Perhaps Phantom Tollbooth is weak in the songwriting department, since these tunes have yet to stick with me after a dozen plays. Structurally, if not formally, despite the presence of white boy singing, the songs have more to do with be bop than pop song structure. Which brings us finally to the singing. It is simply distracting. Whichever one (or two) of the three is singing, I just wish they wouldn't. A glance at the lyric sheet doesn't offend me, but it is no justification for the blasé vocals. They sound like whoever sings (sang) for the Volcano Suns, Squirrel Bait, Hüsker Du, Nice Strong Arms, etc. Excuse me while I puke. I hope I didn't get any on you. With or without vocals these boys really kick 'em out. For proof check out *Power Toy*. It is their best record. And if what I read in some unreliable publication is true, it is their last record. (from POB 800, Rockville Centre, N.Y., 11571-0800, USA) - G.T.

Robert Poss/Nicolas Collins: *Inverse Guitar* (Trace Elements cassette) Along with Rudolph Grey's LP on New Alliance and the new Roger Miller guitar album, this represents the apex of guitar noise today. Collins is not somebody normally associated with guitar music, and this tape will not do much to change his reputation. Although his "Devil's Music" concept is/was capable of raising a furor any guitar player would envy, he does not play one note on guitar here or there. His "backwards" electric guitars are "electromagnetically resonated" by sampled sound played into the pickups. The players (not Collins) merely tune and fret the guitars since no picking is necessary. "Like A Falling Stone" is more complicated, involving computer controlled distortion of guitar played by Robert Poss. Poss' side is less theoretical but just as interesting to listen to. In fact for the pure pleasure of vibrating strings, I usually prefer Poss' side, though I could do without the cheesy "New Dog" thing at the end. No noise reduction. Chewy. (from 172 East 4th St., #11D, N.Y., N.Y., 10009, USA) - G.T.

Pussy Galore: *Sugarshit Sharp* (Caroline E.P.) All right, I don't want to hear any more crap about how it's all been done before or flogging a dead horse or anything like that because of course it has, and it had in 1978, too, but that doesn't mean some people don't have a way of making you sit up and take notice of the way they do it, people like Teenage Jesus and the Jerks, people like Pussy Galore. The five new Pussy Galore songs on this record rock harder than anything I've heard in 1989, so much that I can only say get this! It's not the virtuosity of the playing or the originality or depth of the lyrics that makes this so exciting but it is incredibly so, nevertheless, even to someone as old and tired as myself. Jon has a way with word like shit and goddamn that's sort of like another skinny black haired singer with a big belt buckle from about twenty years ago, but this does not sound like sixties music at all. Bob Bert's drums are like kids and dogs and cats running through an alley, and of course there are the guitars, three of them. If you think you love rock and roll, and you're not playing this at least once a day, you've missed the boat entirely. I'll warn you though that it's hard to find anything to play after this. Try *Cooper S* by feedtime. Oh yeah, the Neubauten cover on the A-side is worth a listen too. Yeah! (from 5 Crosby St., N.Y., N.Y., 10013, USA) - E. McG.

David Prescott: *Walking In Slow Circles* (Generations Unlimited L.P.) There's a list of instruments included with this. Except for the Radio Moscow broadcast they're all electronic. Maybe that's not important, but I'm always amazed at the various sounds these people can coax from supposedly lifeless, inhuman machinery. The album opens with tuneful synthetic percussions that wouldn't sound out of place on some South Pacific island (or at least a Hollywood film set in such a place) and by the end of side two finally reaches those seemingly random bleeps many people associate with electronic music. Along the way he explores a wide variety of sounds and forms. It's not grandstanding or antimusic by any means. Prescott has full control of his material even when he's letting it run out of control. Don't figure it out. Great soundtrack for people who were cyberpunks before that term was invented. (from 199 Strathmore #5, Brighton, MA, 02135-5210, USA) - Lang Thompson

Rapeman: *Budd* (Touch & Go 12" E.P.) It's like if two guys from Scratch Acid and one guy from Big Black got together, and it sounded like Led Zeppelin but not as good. (from POB 25520, Chicago, Ill., 60625, USA) - G.T.

Rustic Hinge: *Replicas* (Restless L.P.) At least ten years before Mofungo and Etron Fou, five years before MX80 Sound and Pere Ubu and contemporary to *Trout Mask Replica* and *Music To Eat* this obscure spinoff of the Crazy World of Arthur Brown was playing music in much the same spirit. This was "progressive rock" at its Magic Band best, and at the time this instrumental music went way out on a limb. It has stood the test of time, without ever coming out until now. I'd rather listen to this than Magma, Atomic Rooster, or King Crimson, not to mention most other records that came out in '88. (from 30 Berwick St., London, W1V 3RF., England.) - G.T.

Tim Lane Seaton: *The Animal Speaks* (cassette) This is the tape that comes in a personalized tote bag. It's not what those familiar with Tim's solo work are going to expect. This is not solo bass, nor is it particularly noisy or atmospheric. Much of this was probably developed as improvisation but the final results sound like written pieces. A few of these would even qualify as actual songs by most any standards. All of which might cause some readers to be wary of this tape, but fear not. This is music worth checking into. Tim's bass lies at the core of this sound which wanders around the round earth looking for a place it feels at home. And without much luck because Tim's references are as scattered wide as his samples. There are songs on this tape I like a great deal, other songs make me laugh every time and one or two I have learned to fast forward over. (from Tim Seaton, 161 Mangum St. #304, Atlanta, Ga., 30313, USA) - G.T.

The Scene Is Now: *Tonight We Ride* (Lost L.P.) The third album from these oddballs is not nearly so odd as the other two, but it is still much too odd to put a pin into. These scenesters are responsible for a topsy-turvy brand of "songwriting" unlike any other in "rock". The hooks grab hold of you the way they were meant to do, but they do so in a way you could never guess. David Thomas and his pals (one of them is here too) should be capable of making music that would sit comfortably on a shelf next to the music on *Tonight We Ride*. Yet, Ubu's recent work boils down to something quite a few shelves down from there. The Scene Is Now continues to twist at the listeners' expectations without resorting to outright Jonny Richman corn. (from 346 East 13th St. #7, N.Y., N.Y., 10003, USA) - G.T.

Seven Simons: *Clockwork* (Dog Gone L.P.) Sounding as much like the Smiths in some spots as much as any other Athens Georgia band (there are exceptions, you know who they are), Athens Georgia's Seven Simons define the term "power pop". They try to muscle it up at points and come up sort of like a hard-driving version of the Kilkenny Cats or some band like that while the ringing guitars recall the classic southern pop of Starbuck's "Moonlight Feels Right".



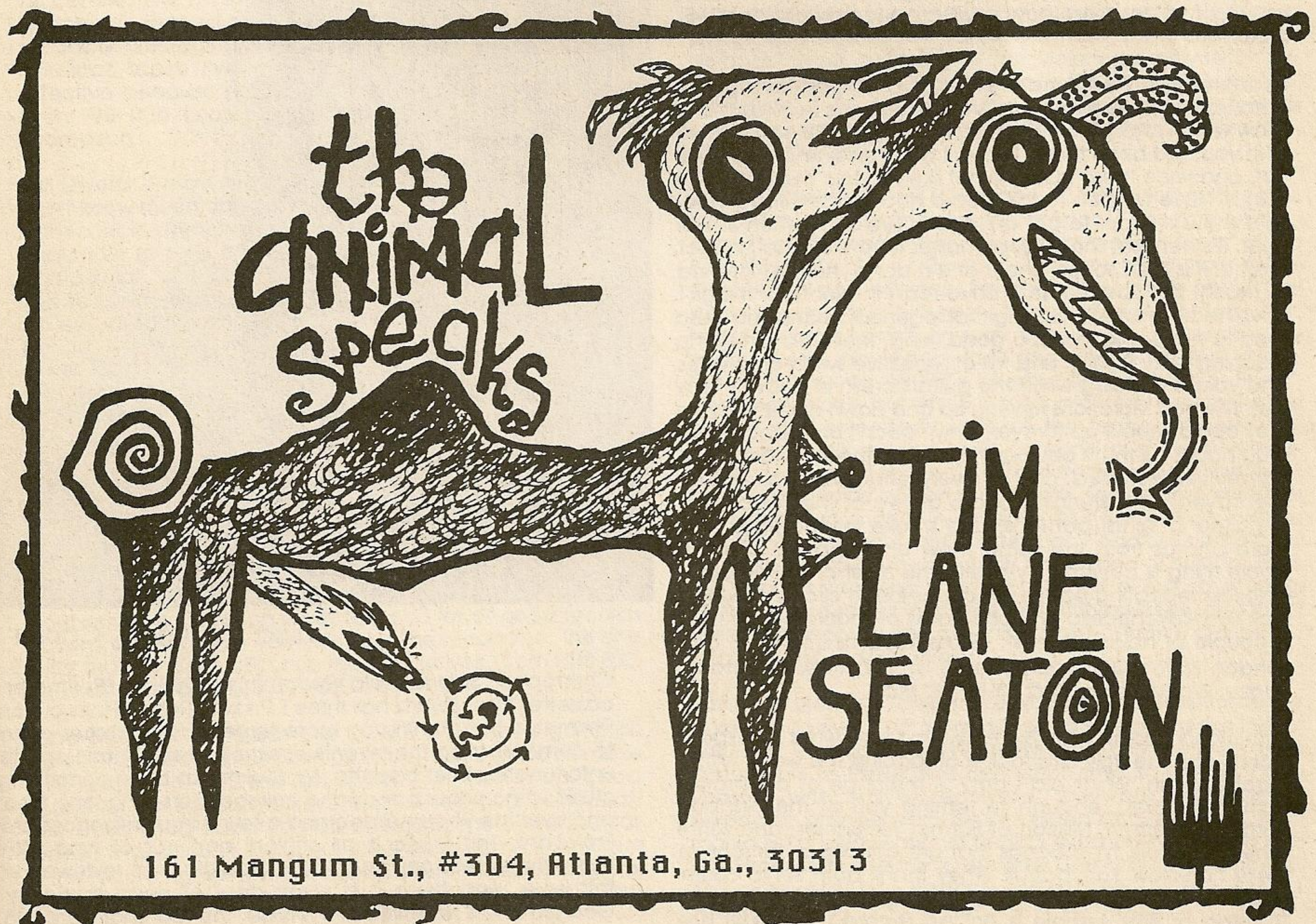
If you want the jangle, this is probably better than most of this ilk. That's not a recommendation, probably. If you regularly read LowLife, this record should hold about zero interest to you. Unless you only bought LowLife for the rare REM and Thurston Moore jam session 45 that comes with this issue. (from POB 1742, Athens, GA., 30603, USA) - Jon Kincaid

Elliott Sharp/Carbon: *Monster Curve* (SST C.D.) C.D. only my black ass! All of this is/was available on just three of Elliott's most recent pre-S.S.T. L.Ps. Of course, all of it is great and offers a glimpse into this important moment in modern music. So if you don't have the originals for some reason and do have a CD player for some other reason, well then, go for this quick. I do have the originals, and I don't have a C.D. player, and my copy is a "test cassette" pre-release that arrived unsolicited in the mailbox. That's one way to be sure people don't sell your promos. (from POB 1, Lawndale, Ca., 90260, USA) - G.T.

Sink Manhattan: *Bleakhouse* (No Age L.P.) The first time I heard this record I just thought it was another one of "those kind of bands", but I was in a bad mood at the time. Later when I came back to it the music began to stick. Musicologists in search of lineage could find plenty of data here. They might hear something of Robin Crutchfield or Martin Rev in the edgy synthesizer bits or something of the Swans in the desperate, ultra heavy, ultra slow drums, but they would be grabbing at straws. This is an original and powerful sounding record that makes few concessions toward the soft headed majority, despite the Beatles cover. Fans of "this kind of band" probably should not pass this up. You know who you are. The rest of you should stay with something really innovative like Halo of Flies or Mudhoney. You know who you are too, now don't you? (from POB 54214, Phila., PA., 19105, USA) - G.T.

Andrew Smith: *Boneyard* (RRR 7") I couldn't decide what speed to play this on, but it says in letters almost as BIG as "ANDREW SMITH" that this is at 33 RPM. Actually it sounds o.k. either way, and I can tell half way through Suicide that the neighbors upstairs love it too. I still haven't figured out who this Andrew Smith person is, but I know he writes a real nice letter and used to do an experimental advice column for the now defunct Industrial noise fanzine *Non Stop Banter*. Whoever he may be, he has put out one fine slice of monoise. It's like bathing in hot oil, when the really bad thing about it is you know it'll be over too soon. There is no amount of nervousness, hysteria or nausea induced by this disc that you can't get elsewhere, but would you know where to look? The record is being promoted as the absolute worst of the worst of horrible sound, but that's just hype. It's worth checking out anyway. (from 151 Palge St., Lowell, MA., 01852, USA) - G.T.

Smog: *Macreme Gunplay* (Disaster cassette) In the first place I have absolutely no idea why this editor and former D.C. area resident has moved to north hellhole Georgia to release tapes of songs about his swell sense of fashion. I've never laid eyes on the guy and can tell nothing about the "rip in the back of his shirt", but I can testify that this tape contains a bunch of fucking obnoxious racket that Bill calls songs. Bill sings and plays guitar and hits things and pushes buttons on his tape recorder, and I guess it's something to do in his spare time between issues of his fanzine. Some of it is simple loud rock of the kind that damages fingers, amplifiers and ears. Some of it sounds like some kid that discovered how to make Whitehouse noises about five or ten years after it really counted for much. Some of it sounds like the most pained, bent out of shape "pop" music on the wrong side of Greige Travail. If Bill could sing his voice would probably change and spoil all his dreams. As it is he can only look forward to improving. Home taping is the oddest





sort of "revolution" I'd ever want to meet, sometimes I try not to think about it. What I want to know is what is "macreme", not to mention "macreme gunplay"? (from POB 1642, Buford, Ga., 30518, USA) - G.T.

**Some Velvet Sidewalk:** "I Know"/"Lifetime"/"Snow"/"Jean Waits" (K 7") This week's next big thing in some circles is almost as cool as the reviews make it out to be, but as always that is a pretty questionable standard. Falling somewhere midway between early Daniel Johnston, early Dream Syndicate and Talking Heads 77, this duo has found a niche unoccupied by the likes of the Vaselines. "Simply rockin'" would be a good quick way to wrap up a review. It would also be easy to lift out of context for use in press kits and other forms of advertisement, but nothing in life is so "simple" these days. (from POB 7154, Olympia, WA., 98507, USA) - G.T.

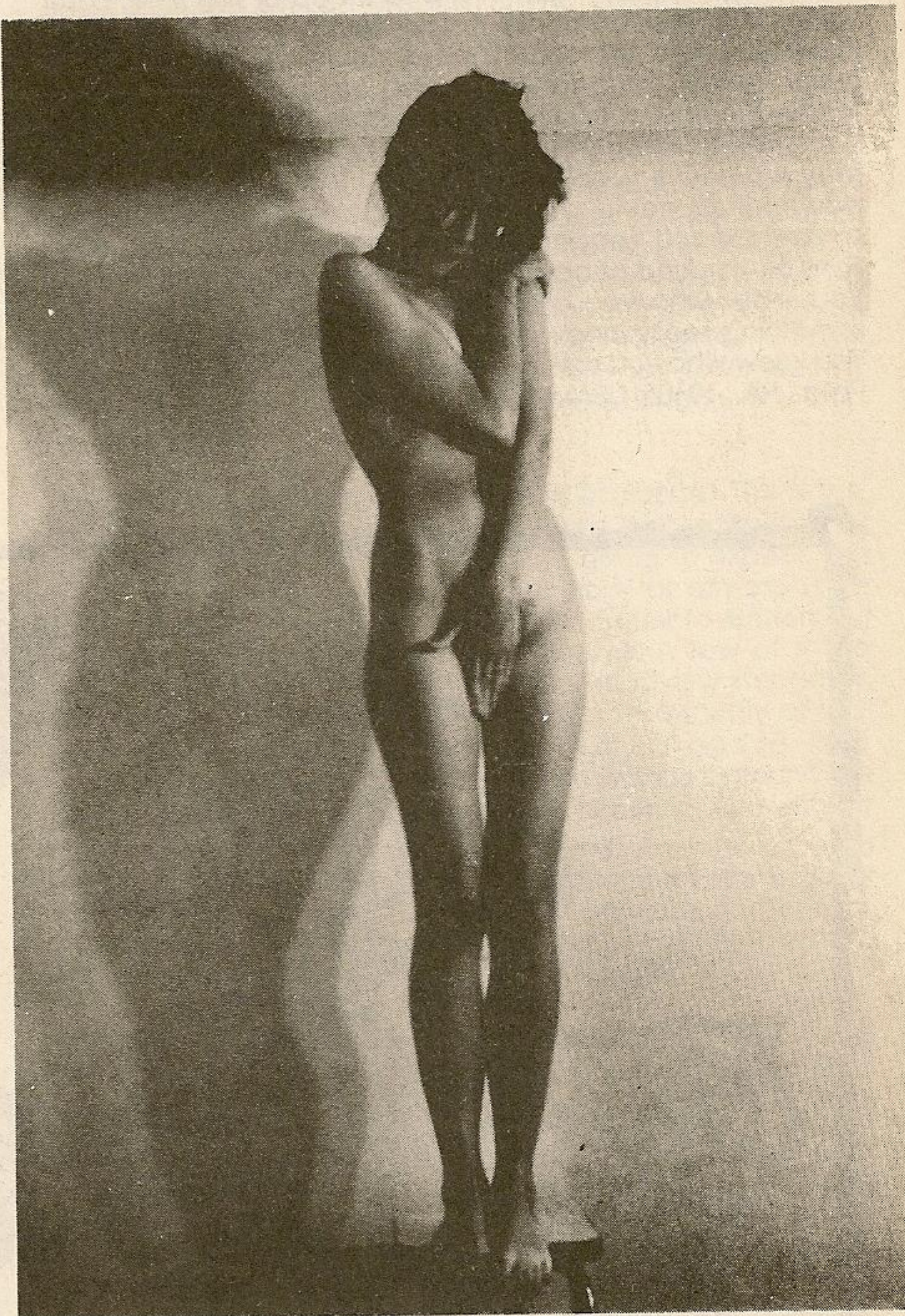
**Sonic Youth:** "Silver Rocket"/"You Pose You Lose"/"Non-Metal Dude Wearing Metal Tee" (Forced Exposure 7") This must exist solely to sell *Forced Exposure* subscriptions to the growing numbers of Sonic Youth fans. It certainly doesn't exist solely because the *Forced Exposure* guys thought it was so great that they had to put it out. It isn't great, but it's okay, and people like us who want to hear all Sonic Youth stuff even though we already get *Forced Exposure* in our mailbox are glad to have it. We even play it sometimes. There's a sludgy sounding live version of "Silver Rocket" that reminds me of a lot of bootlegs I've heard in the way that it is bad but good. "You Pose You Lose", the only non *Daydream Nation* song, is a fun bit of improv between the hits and my favorite thing here, with sparse plucking of taut strings over thunderous rumbling and distant snare rolls. "Non-Metal Dude" is an instrumental version of "Eliminator Jr.", and it's pretty kickass as such with a great throbbing ending, although I love Kim's grunts as much as the next guy. you do not need this record like you need *Daydream Nation*, but it is probably sold out so you are lucky. What do you want to bet these guys at FE are record collectors?--E. McG.

**Spacemen 3: *Performance*** (Glass LP) If you love guitar distortion and feedback you should hear this recording of a show which took place in Amsterdam on 6/2/88 and you will wish you had been there. I know I wish I had. Since we were not, and since these guys are not likely to tour the states, we will just have to listen to this record and imagine the groovy light show in order to get an idea of live Spacemen 3 over here. It's not that the subject matter is very original, in fact, most of it is MC5 songs, and that is a band I haven't listened to much, but Spacemen 3 have roots in plenty of things I have heard a lot of including that legendary band Lou Reed used to have and that is a good thing. There's a throbbing moaning fuzzy thick sound full of repetitive swells and fades and voices echoing while the guitars crash in a lovely way over the bass vibrations running up and down and it feels like they could keep it up forever. They needn't brag about their drug habits as this is obviously music for the stoned masses, themselves included, and it is very effective as such too. The cover has a stunning photo of two of the Spacemen engulfed in lights, patterns, and smoke on the front with more photos from the same show on the back and the whole thing is covered over with the most amazing glossy colorless repeating pattern of circles inside circles making it look very psychedelic and one could probably look at it for a couple of hours, at least. (Glass Records from POB 875, London NW6 2QQ; Spacemen 3 at 207 Railway Terrace, Rugby, Warwickshire, CV21 3HU) - E. McG.

**Stripminers** (Community 3 L.P.) Wasn't sure what to expect when I saw the ugly bird facing off against the worm with a machine gun. What did I get? A melange of cool rock-cum-rock music, enough to remind you of the Birthday Party, Minutemen, Mission of Burma, Tar Babies, and some other New York type bands that are equally as famous as these non-New York bands. (They thank both Sonic Youth and the Assmaster on the back, though I don't think either Thurston or Billy Asshole is on the record.) This vinyl has

seven songs of which none is bad enough to make me wince and I especially like "Barn Burning" and the instrumental "Sheep Killin' Dog", which reminds me in a way of 86. (from 416 East 13th St. #12, N.Y., N.Y., 10009, USA) - Jon Kincaid

**Suckdog: *Drugs Are Nice*** (L.P.) This is the 1st LP by Suckdog without Coste, and I could tell by one glance at the front cover that this was going to be a hit. The music is as usual weird, but sounds even weirder coming out of a record than it did coming from cassettes before. The upcoming CD should be even better? This has Lisa and Helen and Rachel and a bunch of others singing their lovely songs, screaming giggling, and so on. There is even some electric guitar on here when Suckdog pretends to be Freedom Puff, sort of. A bunch of great songs continue to develop familiar themes: "Oh Mighty Pigeon", "The Song of the Flying Cats of the Stars", "Will I Ever Do Anything With My Clothes On?"... Lisa Carver and friends know how to make good records: fast cheap and with classy photography on front. (from POB 1491, Dover, N.H., 03820, USA) - G.T.



Lisa "Suckdog" Carver

**Christopher Swartz: *Solo Recordings 1983/88*** (Perimeter cassette) Chris Swartz has three L.P.s with Robert Hollis out on Perimeter, but nothing on those three records comes close to demonstrating the inventive, excellent solo music on this unfortunately brief cassette. Mr. Swartz has been performing music with various bands and collaborators for a long time and over the years he's learned a few things. Influences are irrelevant. This music is as original and out of sync with everyone else as any music by a Georgia artist reviewed in this issue, and there is a great deal of good music by Georgia artists reviewed in this issue. The fact that Chris is in



the first place a drummer doesn't go far toward giving an impression of what this music sounds like. Chris uses a variety of his special homebuilt instruments along with some mass manufactured instruments to achieve an arsenal of musical sounds. Most of this music lays in the background and avoids being abrasive even when musical boundaries are being stretched. Yet, the music isn't timid or ambient. The way most of these songs are constructed does not rely on convenient musical constraints. Almost everything on the tape skirts around the outer edges of what a lot of people might consider beauty, to the point of being downright pleasant. This tape comes with a booklet outlining the particulars of each cut, along with diagrams of some homebuilt instruments and a foldout Christopher Swartz musical family tree, so you'll know everything you need to know. (from POB 28882, Atlanta, Ga., 30358, USA) - G.T.

Swine Is Mental: *Date With A Meathook* (Sound of Pig cassette) This is the kind of thing that really makes you appreciate cassettes. It would never appear on LP unless these guys put it out themselves, and even then the whole aura of vinyl would make it too weighty. I can imagine Swine Is Mental (one of them is Chris Phinney from the Harsh Reality label, the other is R. MoneyMaker who I think also works under the name Swinebolt) sitting around late one night and cranking out the drones, loops, distortion, guitars, synths, noises and such that go to make up these intriguingly low key, soothingly uncontrolled pieces. In a way it's sort of generic, but I really enjoy the genre even if I can't name it, so I enjoy the tape as well. Perfect logic. (from 28 Bellingham Lane, Great Neck, N.Y., 11023, USA) - Lang Thompson

Le Syndicat: *Vorgine* (C-46) One of the masters of edge-of-sanity destructonnoise returns with a more sedate outlook. Instead of unleashing a torrent of howling aggression, here Le Syndicat slows the pace for pulsations of moaning fierceness. Fits of sound, freed from any recognizable source, are looped and distorted in the most peculiar and probably unimaginable ways. Out of the four or five Le Syndicat tapes I've heard, this is probably the most effective because of the variety of textures and sounds. (from 90 Rue Leon Frot, 75011, Paris, France) - Lang Thompson

Tall Dwarfs: *Hello Cruel World* (Homestead L.P.) Honestly, I don't know much about this band's rather lengthy history. But rather than spending large amounts of money on their expensive imports as I have begun to do, this "nice safe compilation of T. Dwarfs stuff for you foreigners and yer overseas earholes" is a good place to begin. Although it is collected from several records released over a three year period, this is the most coherent collection of Tall Dwarfs songs I've heard. Still, it is difficult to describe this queer amalgamation of folksy, roots musics and a vaguely rocking sensibility. So what am I doing here?-- struggling as always, trying to describe in words a musical listening experience when you have to be there to understand. The easy way out is to toss out a few references and/or comparisons to others, but the list that comes directly to mind would not give anybody any idea what this record sounds like. Let it be enough then to say this may be the most important and original record to come out on Homestead since they put out a similar sort of collection of Neubauten stuff. Which is not to say a lot of good records haven't come out on Homestead in the meantime. This one is just that significant. Pour on the superlatives. (from POB 800, Rockville Centre, N.Y., 11571-0800, USA) - G.T.

Terre Blanche: *The Sickle Cell* (A.W.B. 7") What is going on here? This is power electronics in the basic loud, abrasive shrill manner of Whitehouse, Sodality, or the Haters, good sound for the schizophrenic, if that's where your head is at. The weird thing about this band is, well, there are several weird things about it. First there is the band name. Then there is the record name. Maybe there is even the label name: all white bands, all white boys, Average White Band? Your

guess is as good as mine. Some other A.W.B. groups include the Grey Wolves and Slave State. All of this stuff is taken very seriously in the pages of places like *U-Bahn* magazine, and I was prepared to do likewise. Then I saw the "band photo" on the back: three skinheads (one in a Skrewdriver tee) posed before a vaguely swastikaesque logo, and I began to think about all kinds of weird new concepts: Industrial Nazi Rock? Well, forget the "Rock". Forget I ever mentioned it, even. I mean, I've read reviews of Crass that described the Crass symbol as swastika-like. Why should I care anyway? For more answers: lyrics are available for \$2 from the label address below. "This project was manufactured entirely in the United States of America." (from POB 14194, Chicago, Ill., 60614-0194, USA) - G.T.

The Thrown Ups: *Eat My Dump* (Amphetamine Reptile 7") Another great, totally offensive record from this "sick sick sick" band, *Eat My Dump* is easily one of the two or three singles of '88 I prize most. I don't really know what these guys look like but I imagine four drunk, drooling, grinning slobbs who think it's real fun to fart loud in front of old women and young girls. Anyway, the music sounds like that. (from 2636 Lyndale Ave. #4, Mpls., Minn., 55408, USA) - G.T.

Undercurrent: *Trig P. Toma* (cassette) The second tape I've heard from this "band" is one I can certainly enjoy. It was made by "physically destroying acoustic sound sources" with no "conventional instruments". Big deal, huh? By now even such an approach is conventional, in terms of the quality called "newness", unless we are talking in comparison to the shit that comes out of the radio 98% of the time. If that's the standard, this then is very radical. Take your neighbor's radio playing Power 99 (or WREK for that matter) and smash it with a brick, then this is last year's model. I once placed a radio/tape-recorder under the hood of my car while I cranked it up to see what it would sound like. The last gasp of the recording as the machine fell into the drive belt would fit right at home on this tape. This was recorded in various remote Arizona locations, presumably due to the abrasive nature of the sound, but perhaps it was because of the violence involved in the process. We can only wonder. (And hope?) In the meantime, I wonder when the next Undercurrent tape is coming out. (from Bill Jaeger, 506 W. Johnson, Payson, AZ., 85541, USA) - G.T.

Unrest: *Malcolm X Park* (Caroline L.P.) I still can't quite figure this one out, but someone else probably has. The no-big-deal 7" on Teenbeat Records had a snappy cover of "So You Want To Be A Rock n Roll Star" and two other forgettable pop originals. I'm also still not sure about the state of being of a previous L.P. or if anyone actually ever heard it. I know I didn't. Anyway, this new L.P. on Caroline is a wildly diverse mix of pop, rock and what-have-you, a little like listening to WREK's "Rock, Reggae and Blues" afternoon block, but there is a blindfolded monkey at the board, and somebody stole all the reggae records. To categorize this music would demand a string of cliché ridden adjectives so long it would confuse even the most hardened fanzine aficionado. What's good about this L.P. is everything works on its own terms. Some standouts include a hard hitting title cut that's better than Head of David but not as good as Blowgun, a catchy one called "Christina" and the genuinely rocking "Castro 59". None of the other songs on this record sound much like one of those three, and that's weird but neat. Do you call this a band? (from 5 Crosby St., N.Y., N.Y., 10013, USA) - G.T.

Urban Ambience Orchestra: *Musique du Jour* (Camaraderie cassette) If I ever start a band it would sound a lot like this (or would if I could conventionally play any conventional instruments as these folks can when the urge strikes): free improv with lots of repetition, wayward instrumental passages, strange percussion, unidentifiable sounds, tape manipulation. Noisy but not grating even when they jam with Due Process on one track. Naturally I love this. (from POB 403, Kenmore Station, Boston, MA, 02215, USA) - Lang Thompson.





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Various: *Colorado* (RRR Anti-record) As a result of some squabble, this former record achieved anti-record status when Ron Lessard went back and carefully scratched off the Architects Office cut from every copy he had, as well as marking out Architects Office member Joel Heartling's name from the five places it appeared on the cover. I don't know how many of these were sold as records before Ron took revenge, but I imagine both versions are going to be pretty hard to come by. Anyway, Ron says it's too bad because it was one of the best things Architects Office has done. I wouldn't know, but the rest of the album, the playable portion, shows a diverse array of noise and experimental sounds. None of the artists involved seem much concerned with commercial potential and even most conventions of the trendy noise underground are shunned. City of Worms is the only group that indulges in the heavy rhythms that have become the standard of industrial culture as it is taught in grade school, but their "Badget" still stands out as the dizzy number it is. Joshua Stevens' three irritating exercises in feedback music are about the highlight for this reviewer, though cuts by Doll Parts and Rick Corrigan also stand out. Human Head Transplant makes me yawn. Send sympathy cards to Joel Heartling at 550 College Ave., Boulder, CO., 80302, USA. Or write to Ron Lessard at 151 Paige St., Lowell, MA., 01852, USA. - G.T.

Various: *Eat Shit Noise Music* (Statutory/RRRRecords cassette) This one's simply got to be one of Ron's best ideas yet, to steal a bunch of songs from various expensive and/or impossible to find records by some of those crazy Japanese noise bands you've heard so little about and compile them on this one easy to get, inexpensive tape. This music is some of the funniest freshest, most inventive all-out-noise around. Hanatarash and the Boredoms alone should give any disheartened new waver at least some reason to live. I haven't heard most of the original records compiled here, though the three Hanatarash cuts and the liner graphics were pulled off their great L.P. 2. The cuts by Grim, Gerogerigegege, and the two other above named groups of crazies are sure to make you lose your lunch or at least do something, but I really am pretty blown away by all of this. Strange that Japanese "work ethic", when it can produce amazing garbage like this pile here. (from 151 Paige St., Lowell, MA., 01852, USA) - G.T.

Various: *Fragment 1* (ND cassette) The first in a projected six-volume set of underground musicians. Each of two contributors gets a side. Jeff Greinke contributes more of his playfully moody soundscapes while Pierre Perret's side is a collage of natural sounds from his *Gaia, La Terre* tape (why nothing new?). Both show different compositional styles that are based on recombining fragments of sounds, feelings, whatever. The booklet has interviews, lists of recordings and essays. Well worth your while. (from POB 4144, Austin, Texas, 78765, USA) - Lang Thompson

Various: *His Master's Voice* (Statutory/RRR cassette) When doing a "tribute" (though I suspect many of these people don't really like Elvis which is a problem) like this the two main options are (1) to perform songs associated with Elvis in which case you tend to lose whatever made them unique leading to option (2) manipulations of actual Elvis recordings in an attempt to capture the voice, the aura. The best thing here is Evan Cantor's "Paralyzed" which takes tactic (1) but with a fairly unfamiliar song and completely straight unlike some of the other covers here that lean towards the Residents too much. In general there's lots of messed-up sounds, noises, singing, etc from Due Process, La Sonorite Jaune, John Oswald, Wigglepig, etc. Most of it works, some doesn't, so what? As a bonus there are two songs from Elvis himself (but none from Orion) that probably came straight off the way cool *Elvis' Greatest Shit* bootleg. (from 151 Paige St., Lowell, MA., 01852, USA) - Lang Thompson

Various: *Immunity By Inoculation* (Bangaway cassette) Occasionally out-of-state readers complain that a lot of the features in LowLife on Southern noise are of little or no value

since no one outside the region has heard these groups. It's a moot point actually since most of those obscure artists featured in LowLife would gladly send out tapes to interested inquiries to the contact addresses we generally supply. Nevertheless, I'll admit that writing to all those individual bands or artists is a time and money consuming task. Compilations often supply a solution to such dilemmas. Here is one such compilation that gives everyone a quick and easy way to hear seven Southern, uh, bands. These are Butcher Phone, Geoff Dugan, Greige Travail, Nature Protein Biscuit, Shaking Ray Levis, Size Ten Jaw, and Tinnitus. Long time LowLife readers probably know something about Tinnitus and Shaking Ray Levis by now. For the rest of you unfortunates, it should be enough to say these are the two most important improvisational outfits operating out of the South today. (Add Borbetomagus to that list and I'd say "the three most out of the US".) Needless to say, their two approaches are as different as night and day respectively. Geoff Dugan is a longtime Southern experimenter. His eight minute work on this cassette is as strong and thoughtful as all his recent material. He has a new cassette out (reviewed elsewhere this issue) that demands to be heard. Size Ten Jaw is the now defunct incredible/adventurous noise unit that impressed this reviewer more than most of the generally excellent bands that played at the third Destroy All Music Festival. Greige Travail is an indescribable decaying pop band that continues to claim to have only two members as they release their 37th tape in the last six months. Many more hours of material is available from the address below. Nature Protein Biscuit is the oddball hybrid of the previous two entries plus Grace of the much mourned DQE, and live this group is too good to believe. Out of the simplest melodic structures which they bleed dry in the translation, these kids build a new kind of rock that's all their own. The nine minutes of music here just begins to touch on the wealth of this music. Butcher Phone is, well, fuck if I know exactly what it is. Rumor has it that this is Kevin Dunn's attempt at "industrial music", but I think it's really Tom Smith's new solo side project. Whatever, anybody that wants to guess for themselves can get what they want by sending \$5 to the address below. Happy hunting. (from 1460 Cornell Rd., Atlanta, Ga., 30306, USA) - G.T.

Various: *Mondo Stereo* (Tinnitus (sorry, no relation-ed.) L.P.) Presented by *Away From The Pulsebeat* magazine, here is a compilation so hip you'll want to puke. It barely steers an inch from the standard fanzine line of so cool with a lineup that includes the following "correct" artistes: Mudhoney, BALL, Sylvia Juncosa, Lazy Cowgirls, Beat Happening, Halo of Flies, Jad & David Fair, and Daniel Johnston. Of course, I like most of the above named so and so's and a couple of them are among my ultimate favorites (hint: they're brothers), so I have no real complaints about this collection. There are a couple of turds, but let us not dwell on those weaker moments. Beat Happening is up to and beyond their usual very high standards with a brilliant ode to the sorrows of Christmas and life in general. "1988" is a great Stoogerama by Halo of Flies, the most convincing addition to the genre I've heard in a dog's life. Those nasty midwest boys from Urge Overkill and Killdozer have joined forces to pay tribute to the bad forgotten band Crow. The results are as ugly as you'd expect. BALL's "Amazon" is a sizzling work out for Don Fleming, but not much of a song. Do you really expect bands to waste their best songs on one-off deals like this one? Lazy Cowgirls blast your face with punk that exists somewhere between 1977 and 1966 in 1989. The real surprise for this reviewer is Green's "Away From The Pulsebeat". I don't remember anything on their L.P. I heard that was this good. These nerds from Idaho or someplace have really captured what's good about English pop like hardly anybody in the U.K. outside Jowe Head or Marc Riley seems capable of doing in the second half of this quickly receding decade. Otherwise Mudhoney and Of Cabbages & Kings offer no surprises, but fans of either will not be displeased. The same could be said of the joint effort by Jad and David and Daniel, but how could it be any other way? As for the



rest, and there are some others, you'll probably be able to read about them in other reviews of this album in other fanzines. (from POB M1842, Hoboken, N.J., 07030, USA) - G.T.

Various: *Ne* (Banned Productions cassette) Compiled by Hater G.X. Jupiter-Larsen, this collection of Japanese noisemakers could be just the thing to brighten your day or scare your neighbors or whatever. While not exactly groundbreaking, these musicians have a dedication to their work that keeps it interesting. Intense, grating, nervous, all the usual descriptions apply and you know whether you need it (I sure do). Merzbow is the only familiar name here but there's a booklet with contact addresses so you can participate in a little cultural exchange. (from POB 323, Fremont, CA., 94537, USA) - Lang Thompson

Various: *No Borders* (Generations Unlimited L.P.) Nice collection of electronics that opens each side with a fairly conventional piece and moves into more peculiar realms. Arcane Device, for example, uses nothing but feedback but avoids a grating, earcleaning sound in favor of interlacing, crystalline structures. Conrad Schnitzler builds a piece out of complex polyrhythms. Iancu Dumitrescu mixes bell-like sounds with restrained shrieks and Charles Cohen writes electro-gamelan horror film soundtracks. Though it's certainly not nostalgic, *No Borders* brings back an older attitude of electronic music that allowed little outside sounds. Fortunately, the various contributors draw more on Can than Kraftwerk, Stockhausen more than Tangerine Dream; they're demanding but not inaccessible. This album has taken its own shape the more I've listened to it, and I definitely plan to seek out more music from these folks. Which makes it a very successful compilation. (from 199 Strathmore #5, Brighton, MA., 02135-5210, USA) - Lang Thompson

Various: *Sub Pop 200* (3 12" E.P.s) I never thought the first Sub Pop comp was such a big deal despite all the big names because it really didn't offer much that was new to me. This follow-up promised to be a bit more interesting with 100% unreleased cuts by mostly semi-unknown (to me) Northwest American bands. As it turns out there are only a handful of good songs on this three volume monster and very few surprises and nothing as challenging as Boy Dirt Car or even Savage Republic, who both made the "industrial side" of *Sub Pop 100*. I had no doubts that the Thrown Ups would not let me down, and their "You Lost It" is up to par, starting out as Jandek with the blues before descending into the usual twisted noise. Beat Happening's "Pajama" is as cool, calm, collected as this brand of teen stomp gets, but it is nowhere near as good as "Christmas" from the above reviewed *Away From The Pulsebeat* comp. "Sex God Missy" by Tad is the one unexpected treat. There are also o.k. songs from Fluid, Mudhoney, the Walkabouts, Fastbacks, Blood Circus, Swallow, Girl Trouble and Cat Butt. Otherwise and all in all this is good background noise for reading *Flesh & Bones* magazine, but not as good as *Toys In The Attic* or *Led Zeppelin II*. (from 1932 1st Ave. #1103, Seattle, WA., 98101, USA) - G.T.

Various: *Testament* (RRR L.P. with magazine) The long in the works compilation/magazine from RRR is about as fine as one would expect it to be. Because I believe RRR to be responsible for some of the finest noise available in recorded form, it's obvious I think pretty highly of this new package. At least two (Arcane Device, Eric Lunde), maybe more, of the selections are available on other records but that doesn't detract from the cohesive nature of the record. It's a really well put together comp. that works as a whole very well. I find it hard to pick out what I like best. Maybe the Rik Rue cut is not so great, but otherwise, this is all top notch and very diverse. Some of it will grate (Native X, S.B.O.T.H.I., Arcane Device). Most of it is simply great (John Wiggins, Massimo Touniatti, E. Lunde, Sink Manhattan). Others who have never been big personal favorites contribute some of their best work (Randy Greif, Illusion of Safety). All of this

comes from deep inside the urban core of noiseland. It is the place to be. (from 151 Paige St., Lowell, MA., 01852, USA) - G.T.

Vaselines: "Dying For It"/"Molly's Lips"/"Teenage Superstars"/"Jesus Wants Me For A Sunbeam" (53rd & 3rd 12") It's another one of my favorite (or should I say fave?) records I heard last year in the "E.P. or single" category, but these fucking imports are so expensive I have a hard time recommending anybody pay for one of them, despite my usual willingness. Also this is not one of the more serious records I've heard in the last week or three years. I don't know much about the "band" but the two flower children on the cover are real cute, and so are their songs. These are danceable or hummable or lovable pop tunes that might spin around in your head long beyond their welcome. The songs sound good alongside stuff by the likes of Television Personalities, the Undertones, or the Mekons, but the Vaselines don't particularly recall those bands in spirit or otherwise. (Nor they each other.) Calculated stupidity, impeccable left hooks, and one of the cheesiest senses of style since the grandeur of Pussy Galore somehow mysteriously add up to something I like. (from 21A Alva Street, Edinburgh, EH24Ps, Scotland) - G.T.

Violence & the Sacred: *Teddy Bear Stinks Real Bad Now* (Kapit@l cassette) Some stars on the move so pay attention now and don't regret it later. Improvisations like you've always wanted: dense, tough-minded, jumpy, full of the weirdest sounds. What more is there to say? VATS are always up to something different, and it's amazing that while most free improv tends to sound similar the good bands all sound different. This one sounds real different. There's already a couple of more tapes out and an album due soon. (from POB 1031, Adelaide St. Station, Toronto, Ontario M5C 2K4) - Lang Thompson

Wallmen: "The News"/"Millo 9"/"Earthwoman" (Dead Judy 7" E.P.) These folks have been active tape artists for some time, but the first time I ever hear them is when they put out vinyl, which should embarrass me but doesn't because who cares as long as they get their music out, right? Right. Well, this is "psychedelic" but without nostalgia, a good thing because Eighties psychedelia is generally a pathetic sight/sound. This is far from pathetic. Actually, I've even listened to it much more than necessary for a review. Here's to more vinyl or tapes or even cardboard records like I used to get from the backs of cereal boxes. (from 7711 Lisa Lane N., Syracuse, N.Y., 13212) -Lang Thompson

Wipers: *The Circle* (Restless L.P.) The Wipers have always been one of those bands everyone seems to say "yeah" about, and I never could figure out the picture, and maybe I just wasn't listening hard enough because this is o.k. Nothing to walk through walls over, but definitely, mostly good straight ahead rock music. The angst comes off a bit pompous and Billy Squier-like at times, but Greg Sage finally won me over a little bit with this, the Wipers' 4,000,000th record. Definitely not "music for the 90's". (from Culver City, CA., 90231-3628, USA) - Jon Kincaid

Joe Young: *Bury the Needle* (Ajax 7") The Anti-Seen are back and this 45 is a souvenir from where they went while they were gone. Apparently it was recorded at around the same time as the other AntiSeen related record reviewed this issue (the Jeff Clayton 7"). To be honest, despite Young's monster guitar on hand, this is the weaker of the two. The two cuts on Side B merely whet my appetite for a whole new AntiSeen record (*Editor's Note: Which came out on Ajax as LowLife #15 goes to bed*) and "Charlie's Blues" is just silly. Only "Cop" (with Clayton on vocals it might as well be the AntiSeen) really takes me where I want to be. (Write to Young at 2031 Scott Ave., Charlotte, N.C., 28203, USA or write Ajax at POB 146882, Chicago, IL., 60614, USA) - G.T.



# F i l m & V i d e o

Haijo-Kaldan: *Live and Confused* (Alchemy Video) Supposedly a limited release of only 25 which is a pity (if it's true) because this is a video any psychopath would really get a kick out of. Some of the rest of you squares might like it ok too, but I doubt it. Rotten live footage of a bunch of guys running wildly around, rolling in filth and breaking things while other guys stand politely to the rear producing cacophony of squeal, is slapped up against dissection videos that I could hardly stand to watch. Later there are cleaner, clearer, more subdued performances including, I think, H.K.'s groovy take of "Purple Haze" (or is that "Wild Thing"?). Finally comes the screaming match between two clean cut guys and a pretty leather clad girl. This certainly is not a typical rock and roll video, despite the lack of major breakthroughs. It is only a "rock and roll video" at all through great stretches of the imagination. You've heard the music, (or you should have, anyway) now go out and see the video. Where, you are going to see it, I don't know. (formerly available from RRRecords, 151 Page St., Lowell, MA., 01852, USA) - G.T.

Wayne Hollowell: *Comes the Blood* (Video) Written by Molli Worthington and edited, produced and directed by Hollowell, *Come the Blood* was described by one cast member to me as what would have happened if D.W. Griffith had made *Carrie* and *The Color Purple* at the same time, which is something not out of character for the famed master of cinema narrative form. That introduction alone lets you know this has got to be weird. It is.

Worthington plays the pig-faced girl whose only friend is topless Fred Rogers. Cherry Snow plays the crazed Christian mom. Todd Schaffer is a fat uncle or father or something. The actors take the absurd concept and make it ridiculous. Hollowell takes the tape of these ridiculous

performances and makes them completely insane and moving off into another dimension or somewhere. Worthington has tons of great lines that will have you gasping for oxygen in no time. Schaffer is the greatest kicking the frog bitch around in the dirt when she deserves it. After a few more lines about her "angel" (Fred) you'll want to help the old boy out.

In the spirit of Griffith the video is shot silent, but in the spirit of *Color* there is overdubbed narration by Worthington and in the spirit of *Carrie*, some blood (menstrual) smeared on our ugly heroine's face. Only the sick of mind would find much to laugh at here, but I know that includes most of you. If you like *Carrie* for the wrong reasons you'll probably get queasy when you see *Comes the Blood*. If you liked *The Color Purple* for any reason, you deserve whatever you get. (Available from Funtone) - G.T.

Eddie Murphy: *Coming to America* and Spike Lee: *School Daze*. Eddie Murphy made the news recently (as opposed to simply consuming the news) when he took out an advertisement countering one critic's comment that *Coming to America* made fun of American blacks and the "Black Experience". Murphy was a little upset; look, he said, at how the movie is causing blacks to take pride in their African heritage: they're flocking to the movie. Sure, such pride in an African heritage that the Ladysmith Black Mambazo song that opens the film was left off the soundtrack album. And it's still an open question how receptive blacks have been to the film; no film becomes a blockbuster without acceptance by a white audience. The point, though, is that *Coming to America* is certainly a racist film. Murphy and sidekick Arsenio Hall's characters are simply whites in blackface; their reactions throughout the film are primarily those of middleclass whites. The film derives its humor from the loud, drunk, thieving, everybody-for-themselves attitude of the New York ghettos; the comic exaggerations should be obvious but are instead hidden by contrast to the blatant


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fairytale Africa. Needless to say, this is a white version of ghetto life. The barbershop characters and Hall's James Brownian beauty contest MC come dangerously close to Eighties' Step 'n' Fetchits. The film's "African heritage" boils down to a fabulously wealthy fantasyland where zebras and elephants run free, the slaves (or servants, same difference) are happy and the only danger is that of boredom. If Murphy is right and there are people taking pride in that then *Coming to America* is even more dangerous than it first seems. More likely, Murphy is the only one that believes in this African heritage.

There are almost no whites in front of the camera in either *Coming to America* or Spike Lee's *School Daze* but that's about the only similarity between the two. Unlike *Coming to America*, *School Daze* was directed and financed by blacks; it's also aimed at blacks to an almost unprecedented degree. *America* makes some mild jokes about the obsession with looks of an heir to a hair product company; *School Daze* creates an entire production number devoted to straight vs. nappy hair. For Spike Lee this isn't just a cosmetic difference or a gesture of submission: it's the nexus of ideas and emotions about what it means to be black. (Cf. a subhead in Spin about a year ago to the effect that while numerous blacks have sought social assimilation Michael Jackson's hair-straightening and nose job made him the first black to be biologically assimilated. Where are the cyberpunks when you need them?) Making the hair debate a song-and-dance piece is audacious -- as is portraying an entire football game without once showing the action or playing an emotionally charged confrontation between college students and town proles in a fast food chicken restaurant or ending the film with a call to arms that would have roused Bert Brecht -- audacious in that Lee isn't relying on postmodern jigsaw puzzles. This jumble is the only way he can truthfully portray and work through what coming to America really means. Lee is an effective political artist, hell an effective artist period, because he isn't out to -- is

perhaps incapable of -- portraying eternal truths. The conventions of artistic realism have rarely been of any use in dealing with anything you might want to call reality. As hookey as it may sound, *School Daze* is an exceptionally honest work and in that it alienates much of its possible audience. Superficially, there's no place for whites in the world of *School Daze* but if there was ever a signifying absence this is it. Rarely have I felt such an outsider to a movie: Lee isn't playing off white guilt or Seventies blaxploitation "kill whitey"; he's offering no comfortable position for a white viewer. Eddie Murphy offers a prince that most people could easily fantasy-fit. What about Spike Lee? He plays a fraternity initiate that can't join until he loses his virginity: when the fraternity president offers his girlfriend for the deed, Lee's character takes the opportunity. It's impossible to be subtle, this is rape and unlike the movie characters who end up doing the "right thing" Lee's character doesn't follow the conventions. This isn't taboo-breaking for sensation, there's no smirk or winks or irony or second-guessing or justifications. Lee doesn't condone his character's actions; it's just that *School Daze* isn't about establishing moral litmus tests. Like the society that produced it, the American cinema is run through with racism: institutionalized and jerry-rigged, open and occult. The recent prominence of Eddy Murphy and cohorts ("The Black Pack" they've been dubbed) is no sign that anything's different. It's just a way to defuse any criticism or anger. Spike Lee has struggled to make his feisty, thorny films and if there's any hope it's going to be with him and any similar artists. Amanda ngawetu. - Lang Thompson

## L I V E

Elko and Koma: *By the River* (live at the Dancer's Collective //3/18/89// a More Production) I missed their performance at Nexus theatre in 87 because I hadn't heard one word

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about it to recommend it or not until the day of the show. This year I'd received two flyers and been asked if I planned to attend by several who did before, so I thought that I should. While Eiko and Koma performed this year at the Collective, the Nexus Theatre as we have known it in its Ralph McGill location was on its last legs with the "Eye of the Needle" performance featuring Debbey Puff with eggs and Robert Cheatham building a helicopter(!?!). What a wealth of classy entertainment our city has to offer. Anyway, this year's Eiko and Koma piece, *By the River*, lived up to my expectations after all the high praise given to '87's *Grain*. This despite, I think, a great deal of difference between the two performances.

As everyone has said this dance (it is a genre in and of itself that doesn't deserve the burden of a brand name) is indescribable and must just be seen to be "understood". The term is a relative one. I felt quite at home interpreting the "meaning" behind the beauty, the pain, the struggle abstractly without turning to analogy, but I found myself trying out that old school trick anyway. The results are equally obvious and pointless, and probably not far from the intended said "meaning". The point is that words don't matter. Or they don't need to matter. In the case of Eiko and Koma words like "meaning" and "understanding" don't matter much by the time they pass by a set of lips and get laid out on the printed page. Eiko and Koma's dance is a dance of the purest nature. It is a dance out of time. It is a dance almost devoid of movement. Naked and soiled Eiko contorts on the floor, silent, still, so alone, so lovely, so frightening...

...again words don't cut it. There is something very cinematic about the whole experience. It seemed appropriate that the piece begins with a film. The film, lighting, set, and music all combine to create this atmosphere. I was hardly aware I was actually sitting in a room with two living breathing performers until afterwards when they gave their bows—him in costume, her still topless, separated by ten feet of painted set, vulnerable and really there at last. Yet, the film-like quality of this hour long non-narrative also contributes to its very intimate nature. The viewer/audience member is caught up in the experience, perhaps at a loss for meaning, yet at nerve's end, deeply involved in an emotional pause.

A titillating promise of nudity seems to guarantee a sold out house in this city of tightass morals. Yet, the disappointment of nudity without eroticism is equally guaranteed to wilt every guilt-ridden prurient interest in attendance. There is actually some sort of cerebral eroticism in action during Eiko and Koma's performance but it has more to do with the poetry of their movements than it does with the amount of bare flesh on stage. The nudity is so naturalistic, so empty of coy posturing, so lacking in tease, that watching these actor/dancers crawling toward unknown ends becomes an invasion of their psychic struggle. The voyeur is put on display, even as they sit in the dark twitching. - G.T.

## Looking at the Television Set: Lo Nuestro y Lo Suyo by Molli Worthington

"America's Most Wanted" is *Fahrenheit 451* come true. Sit and drama-com didactics provide a fascinating insight into our intellectual development as a species. Just compare Samantha Stevens and Hope Steadman. Change the channel and watch Oprah Winfrey develop a new art form, using the mixed media of TV and other people's lives. TV shows you just how wide the gap is, in case you've forgotten: Leeza Gibbons' cute wrinkled nose in response to an ET feature on Das Furlines. "Mmm... different", pondered pert Leeza.

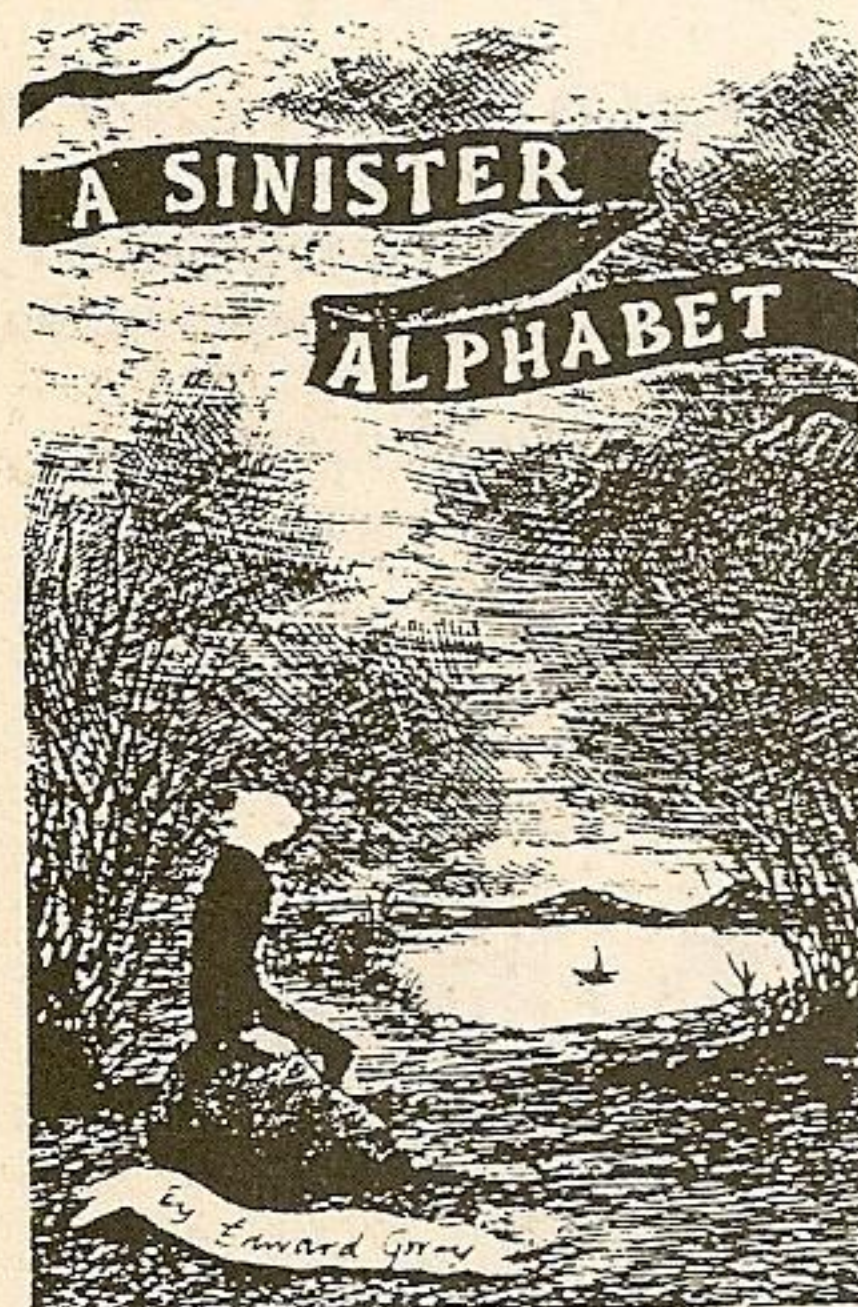
TV has made it possible for us to watch the once fresh-faced Jane Pauley grow middle-aged and frumpy, Johnny Carson and Barbara Walters grow old, and forced us to confront the reality that Kristy McNichol has not grown into a very beautiful young woman. It is an excellent substitute for reality, because it is distorted reality, repeated reality, and our minds are going to distort and repeat reality, anyway.

The explosion of Christa McAuliffe, a homely but caring schoolteacher chosen for Space for her very ordinariness, was a wonderfully warm and powerful tragedy the whole family could enjoy. Television makes the ordinary special by exploding it, or by being there when it explodes by itself, and television makes the special ordinary in the same way.

Watching the same televised image at the same time as millions of our fellow creatures offers as appropriate a modern communality as we could hope for. It opens a way into the hearts and minds of human beings that can only come from shared exposure to anything—from a shoddily covered Phillipine coup d'etat to the clumsy scatological allusions of "Night Court".

Without TV, we would never notice gradual physical transformations such as that of Atlanta mayor Andrew Young into Jeanne Kirkpatrick. "Law Boat" even has a character that looks just like David T. Lindsay.

Like music, TV is a medium whose submedia are increasing exponentially, but TV is frequently denied the



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TUPLO  
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BURN SWEET BRIGHT  
BEAVER HOLLOW LUTHERAN CHURCH  
SLOWBOAT TO CHINA  
SWEATING LIKE A TAIL  
LIL MASTURBATOR  
AH SO, WHAT ELSE  
JANITOR TO THE STARS  
NOT YOUR STYLE

TUPLO  
cd only includes TEN SONGS  
LIVE  
"REHEARSE TOO MUCH"  
SESSION  
RECORDED BY  
PAUL PLOHARSKI  
SPECIAL THANKS TO  
WREK



dignity of the title "art form", because of shows like "Alf", though no one thinks less of music because of Pat Benatar.

Our values, vocabularies, and wardrobes are shaped by television. Even those who refuse to watch, who hate it and all it represents, are influenced by it. Gerbner's functions and dysfunctions retain some validity, though the educational function scuttles increasingly toward dysfunction, as facts are often buried in drifts and swirls of inaccurate to contradictory hypermedia. Talk show hosts are the shamans of our age; every social demon is, if not exorcised, invoked, named and danced around in the sacramental studio.

In its 40 year history, commercial TV has constructed a massive and intricate body of knowledge, much of which can be absorbed osmotically. For example, everyone knows that Whitney Blake (Dorothy Baxter of the first Hazelrigg period) is the real-life mom of Meredith Baxter Birney, but did you know that Fran Heflin, who plays Mona Kane on AMC is Van Heflin's twin sister? TV has taught us that Crest has been shown to be an effective decay-preventive dentifrice when used in a conscientiously applied program of oral hygiene and regular professional care, that Zamfir is the master of the pan flute, and that this is only a test. The network schedules have become the liturgical hours of modern culture. Matins is Joanne Greggains, Lauds is the "Today Show"/"Good Morning America", Prime is Donahue/Geraldo, and so forth.

As the technology of interactive TV advances, we will pay our bills, do much of our correspondence, and vote via our TV sets, just as was foretold so long ago in "My Weekly Reader". When all televised images become fully perfected holograms, TV will have the capability of forming our perceived environment in its entirety. Electronic solipsism will quickly supplant prevailing ideologies.

"Thirtysomething" is horribly depressing, horribly hopeless; relying on blatant or latent gimmickry of the tired sort, from babies speaking in imaginary voices, "Mom, what you need is a Saturday night", to the cloying, "new, intimate" style of camera work, every line delivered like Genie Francis on half a Quaalude, pseudo-Japanese shot composition, and MTV unit pacing. One of the most wonderful shows ever produced, "Aaron's Way", was cancelled after one glorious season. The first prime time network show to feature the Amish, "Aaron's Way" was denounced by every Amish person who ever saw a TV set. Merlin Oleson, of FTD florist fame starred as Aaron. Many viewers remember Merlin from his work on L.H.O.P. with former bedwetter Michael Landon.

Meanwhile, *Univision* continues to approach perfection; the few seams that remain visible, an occasional unintended camera angle or peekaboo microphone, are pleasing to watch.

Spanish soap operas are so much better than Anglo ones that comparison is hardly possible. Even the titles, "De Pura Sangre", "Lo Imperdonable", and best of all "Quinceañera", sound more intriguing than "General Hospital" or "All My Children".

"El Extraño Retorno de Diana Salazar" is about a beautiful young woman whose troubles arise from a previous incarnation during the Spanish Inquisition. "Quinceañera" features a flash of the Quinceañera's larval bosomette in the credits, unthinkable on primetime ABC. Karina, pop singer and star of Venezuelan produced "Alba Marina" ("El novela que es como vivimos ahora") can actually act, and the Spanish like their nymphets extra perky. On "T.V. Mujer", "la primera programa para la mujer Hispana por la mujer Hispana," Luci Pereda is part Cher, part Mary Hart, and part Regis Philbin.

Young love on Spanish TV always means a perky, innocent teenaged girl with bee-stung lips and a similar teen-aged boy. As soon as she is on the apparant brink of eternal happiness—marriage and baby with her beautiful sweetheart—she is sure to lose her sight, her memory, be falsely accused of a crime, discovered to have insanity in the family, or any combination of all of those. Cutaways to holy cards and statues or household shrines are frequent.

Both boys and girls wear lots of waterproof eyeliner past which their frequent tears flow as if by magic, and everyone pronounces every "r" as if it were "rr". It's the strangest injection molding of Catholicism and Madison-Avenue derived ideation imaginable.

*Univision* is unquestionably the best thing to watch, most of the time, though Latin America has its share of unwatchable shows, too. For example—"El Show de Johnny Canales"—think of Porter Waggoner in a Mexican restaurant.

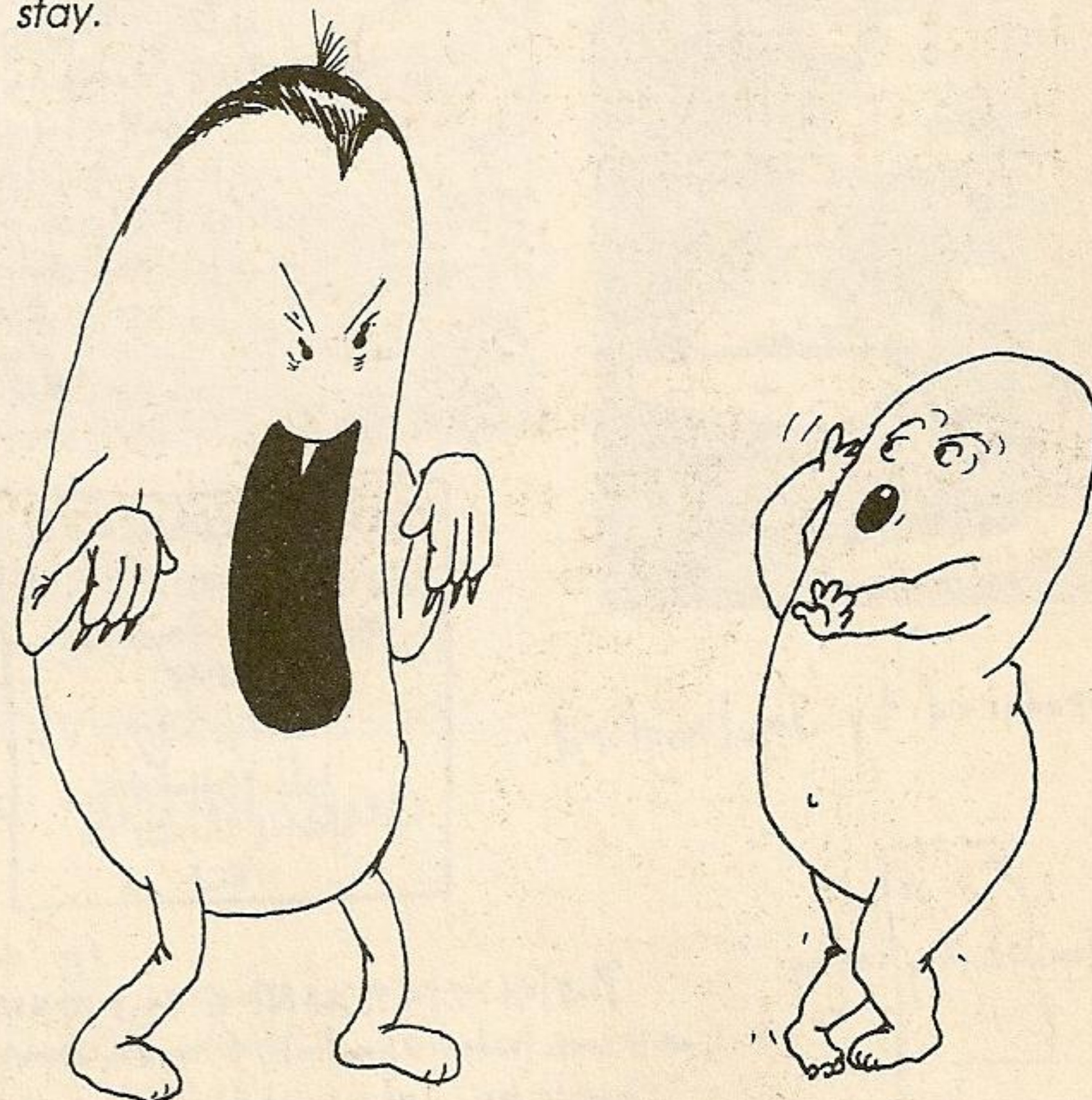
If you want to know to what cute Spanish teens están bailando, you must watch "Siempre en Domingo". This is the Spanish Ed Sullivan show, complete with Raul Velasco, the Spanish Ed Sullivan, and as its name implies, it comes on on Sunday night. "Mala Noche No", the Spanish Johnny Carson, is not on anymore. Veronica Castro, una primera actriz del mundo Hispanico, was the Spanish Johnny Carson. She is also the obvious choice to play Scarlett O'Hara in the GWTW sequel. If you speak no Spanish at all, watch "Sabado Gigante" (Saturday night, 7:30), which does not fit into any established American programming genre. It is part game show, part variety show, part "Real People", and part circus. No language is necessary to understand it or useful in explaining it.

"Noticiero Univision" is somewhat more objective about the US and other governments and shows more gore than the American network news shows (more holdover from the Inquisition?) even the "fillers" like "Lo Nuestro", "Ventana del Mundo", "Cronicas del Siglo XX", are more interesting than watching the evolution of Charlie Rose's pain on Nightwatch.

Our two cultures share this: We do not want to watch the Kirov Ballet or the Metropolitan Opera. We want the 8-year old girl who married her brother and had a two-headed baby that daddy sold to have the truck roof raised. We want the Spanish Inquisition and Heather Locklear and Rob Lowe and Morgan Fairchild and Krystle and Fallon and Tammy Faye. We want to see them in drag, in tears, and in trouble with the law. We want bad religious art depicting the exposed internal organs of deities and their families. We want tiers and tiers of garishly colored polyester lace.

TV, both Anglo and Hispanic, moves inexorably toward the unashamed glorification of White Trash, extruding from the poor grade natural fabric "quality" of these neo-fifties the sticky, undesigned truth of a generational lack of imagination.  
(to be continued)

*Note: Univision changes about 80% of its schedule every 13 weeks. Programs mentioned may not be shown anymore, but the replacements are just as good. "Noticiero Univision", "Sabado Gigante", and "Siempre en Domingo" are here to stay.*





## POEMS by Craig Woodall

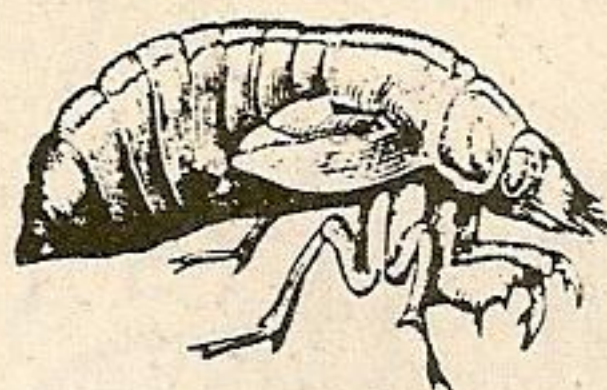


### Admitting

I am so weak  
I can't get through  
my days fall down like poison numbers

I wanted to be like you  
strong and selfish  
lost and uncaring and beautiful  
but I am a coward  
and I am weak

Now I live in a torn velvet curtain  
I cry and I stare at the bare wall  
I try to find the beauty or the few moments  
of pleasure  
as I wait to die or start over



### Nice Day

There was one day one time  
that had a special light of day  
but now that I can say that  
its been so long ago  
I know, we know

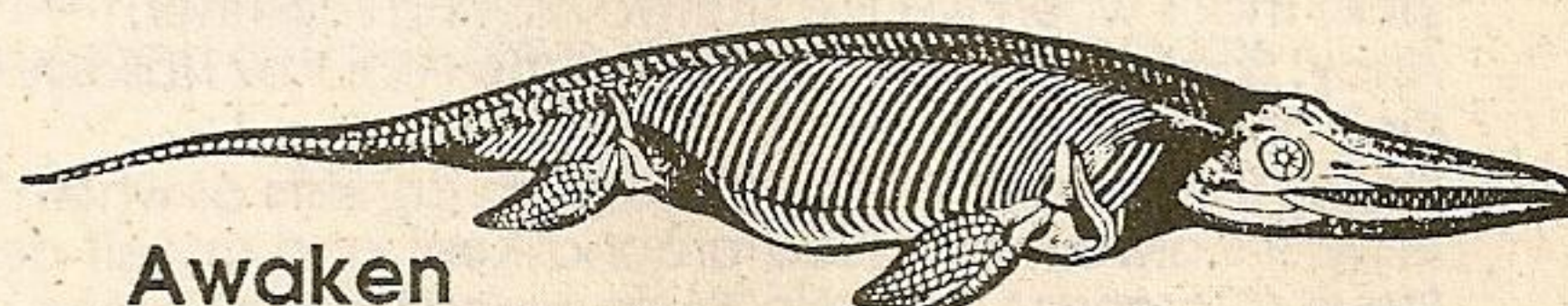
The blue sky is very blue  
the black ocean is very black  
and the fish are very real  
this is the real day so closed;

So we can smile and we can know  
and we go to leave to stay  
to know and forget  
and kill and live  
a few days more

### Dying Time

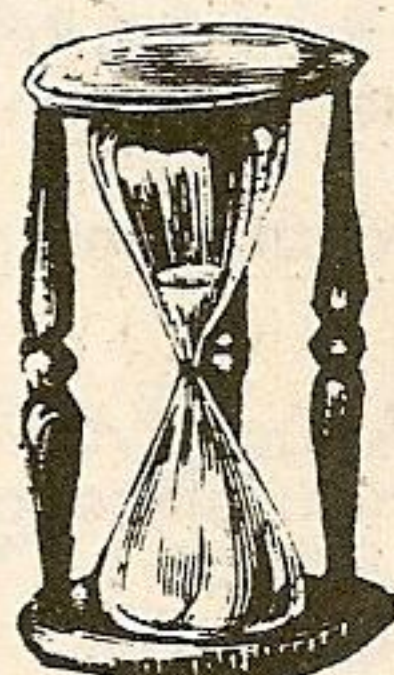
With the diamond sound of snakes  
and bugs and insects,  
rats creaking through the glimmering  
ocean gutter — all flat and congested  
I am waiting here sadly  
at the end of the day  
singing softly  
with my lingering demise  
waiting for your company;

It really is a pretty sunset  
(dying's not so bad after all)  
In fact I may live here  
I may decide to stay  
singing softly wishing sadly  
for your company



### Awaken

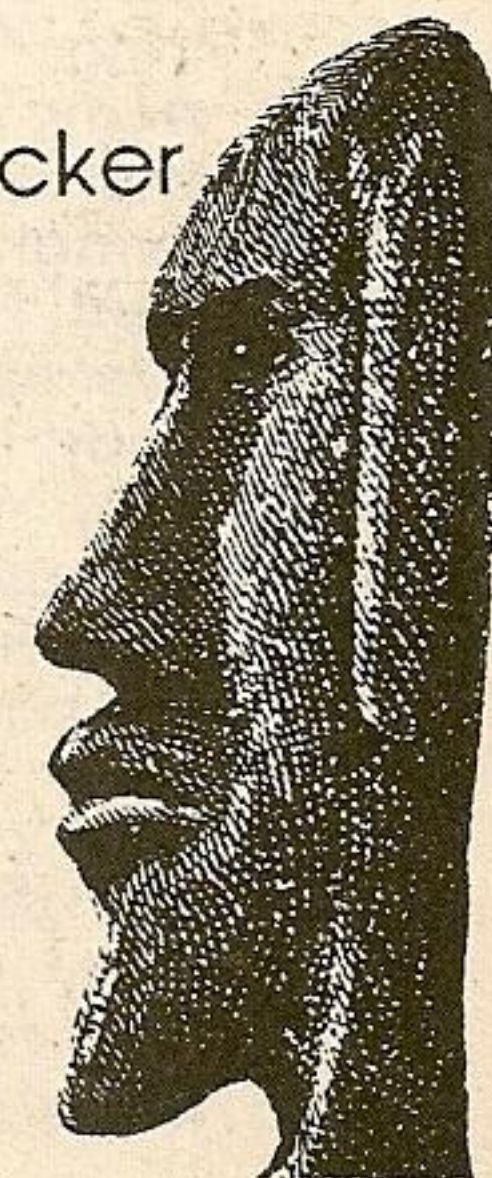
Funny, I could write a poem today  
after all that time being dead  
I had been ripped open  
by falling through abyss after abyss  
and now  
as I slip and die here  
in the descending nightmare  
I can see  
unreal love



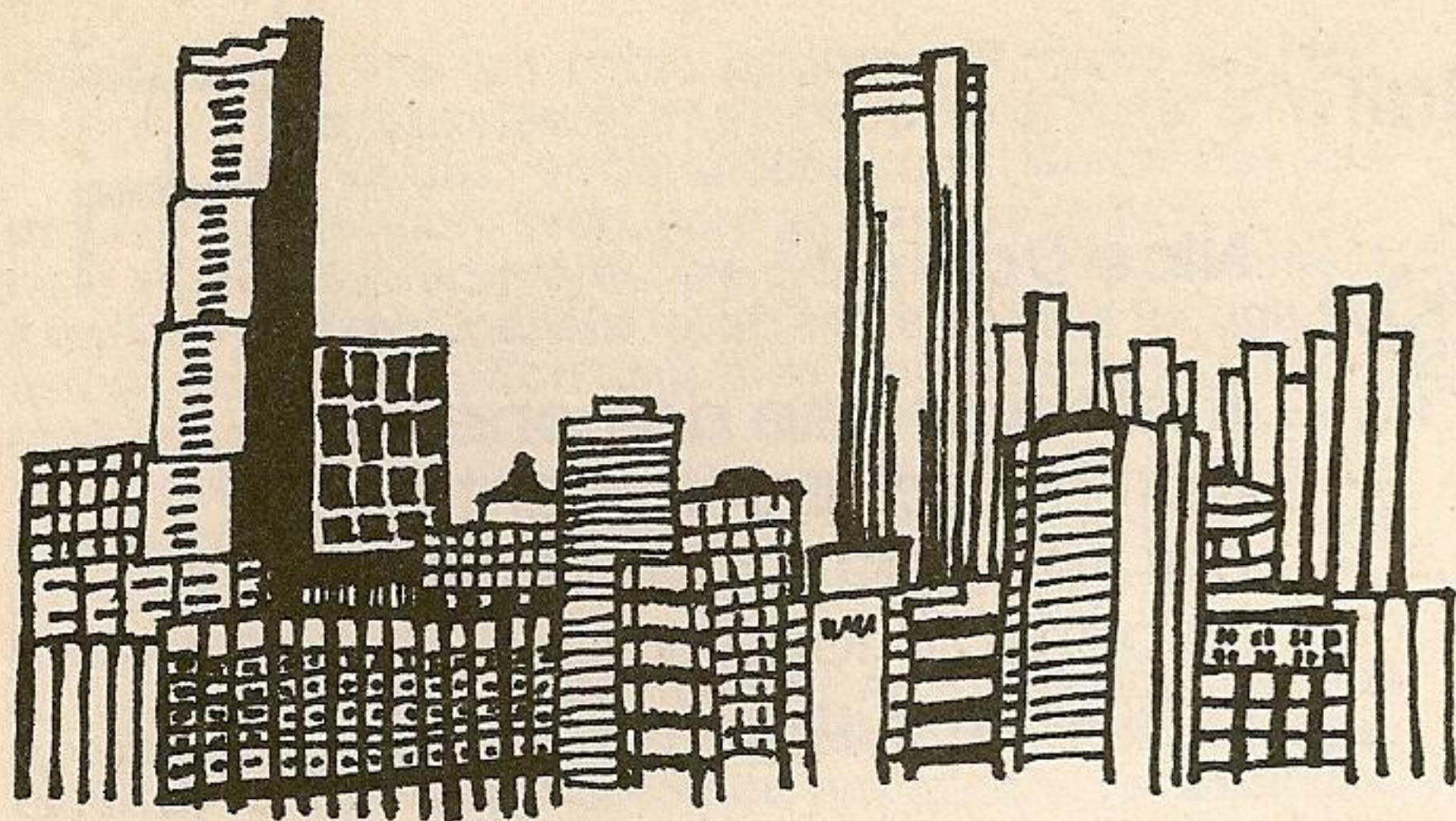
### Bright Day

He's waiting for someone to come and pick him up  
like has happened all the other times  
in these desperate seconds

But this time no one shows  
and the darkness starts to get a little blacker  
the ticking of the clock now makes  
a brand new mask;  
The strangers are arriving now  
like tiny candy spiders  
and as his body is slowly eaten up  
or carried away for some new places  
a little boy finds  
an old beaten up box  
a brand new jigsaw puzzle







# "ATLANTA" Scene

## Flatbush

interviewed by Andy Pierce

Since 1985, Flatbush have been Atlanta's most visible practitioners of post-industrial, audio-visual performance, while drawing their membership from two important electronic-experimental groups: Clubfoot and PVC Precinct. Owing a musical and stylistic debt to Cabaret Voltaire, Psychic TV, et al., Flatbush have begun to forge their own unique merger of MIDI/sampling electronics and large screen computer-video imagery. Flatbush can be heard on their three cassette releases, *Closed Circuit Installation*, *Just Say No*, and *Mondo Virus*.

Kent Worley(ex-Clubfoot) and Rick Longenecker (ex-PVC Precinct) were interviewed at Kent's house.

**Andy:** It was in 1985 when both Clubfoot and PVC Precinct dissolved that the two of you first met?

**Rick:** That's when we first started playing together.

**Andy:** So right around the time of the Pillowtex Halloween show?

**Rick and Kent:** Yes.

**Andy:** The present lineup of Flatbush consists of whom?

**Rick:** It's always revolved around Kent and myself as the nucleus, because we've been the ones to push it. Steve (Goransky) joined in '86 and played with us for a year and a half and Geoffrey (McEachin) joined in '87.

**Kent:** It was in '88.

**Rick:** He basically worked on sampling with us, whereas the rhythm was something Kent and I were doing.

**Andy:** Is there a separation, however, in each band member's duty, because you're incorporating both the electronic music and digital graphics?

**Rick:** Initially, I was more concerned with visuals; video tape and later Super-8mm. Basically, Kent, myself, and Steve were pushing the project where it would go, not depending on any member for any one thing.

**Andy:** Geoffrey came from Gabriel and Bamm Bamm?

**Kent:** Yes. The first time we did anything with Geoffrey was at the old mill in Cabbagetown? No, it was at the Arts Exchange (*Third Destroy All Music Festival*).

**Rick:** That was just the three of us.

**Kent:** That was actually me, you, Geoffrey and John (Laubach;PVC Precinct).

**Andy:** Kent, I remember you saying in *LowLife #6* that you felt certain elements were out of your control with Clubfoot. Do you feel you've regained artistic control in Flatbush?

**Kent:** I had actually lost equipment through theft.

**Rick:** In Flatbush there is no format we adhere to per se.

**Kent:** It's an outlet to experiment with the new tools we get. There's been an increasing explosion of new instruments and new ways of playing, new hardware and software. Unfortunately, there hasn't been an explosion of new clubs to play in.

**Andy:** Would you consider yourselves at the hi-tech end of Atlanta's present music scene, or sort of merging the gap with groups like Damage Report in Athens? They appear to be combining electronics with rock instrumentation.

**Kent:** If you want to put it that way, you could say we're at the hi-tech end even though we use what I consider "garage" type instruments.

**Rick:** And tactics.

**Kent:** We make them work, and we have our problems with them; still, electronic music's always been our big thing.

**Andy:** In the progression through your three cassettes, there was a phase where the music seemed entirely improvised. Then with *Just Say No* and *Mondo Virus* you've merged the improvisation with a "synth-pop" format. Is this a conscious move?

**Kent:** No, actually it's all brief recordings of improvisations. All our tapes are largely improvised with a few overdubs. We haven't concentrated on learning a song and playing it.

**Andy:** Flatbush has a side project, Ether Binge. It functions as something distinct from Flatbush?

**Kent:** Yes. It's a way for us to familiarize ourselves with our computer patch-editors; using the computers strictly as music making instruments.

**Rick:** Free-form. No rhythm per se. We're not heavily involved with Ether Binge right now, not to discount that. But, back to Flatbush. J.D. is a very important new part of Flatbush.

**Andy:** WREK's J.D.?

**Rick:** Yes, insomuch as he's going to be playing and recording with us very shortly. We hope to release some of that within a month to two months. It'll be heavily sampled and scratched up.

**Andy:** Flatbush are now connected with Mark Adams, I guess more specifically with his Mindlight 7 computer hardware/software. What is it specifically?

**Rick:** It's really great software. I happened to find out he lives in Atlanta, and we began communicating.



**Andy:** It's used to interface MIDI sound with...

**Rick:** Any sound. Sound is picked up through a condenser in the unit. Through there it's converted from analog to digital into a series of highs and lows to trigger different graphic routines on the computer. You can mix your own graphics and stills and now use live video.

**Andy:** So, before Mindlight 7 you felt limited with what you were able to do visually with video?

**Rick:** Not so much the video, but the editing thereof. The Mindlight is a digital video editor which allows you to mix many different images at the same time, and unlike past video set ups, the Mindlight allows you to affect it and watch the visuals interact to the beat of the music, the rhythm.

**Kent:** It is also a quick and easy way to see the visuals you've done.

**Andy:** Any feelings concerning the present state of affairs with the Atlanta music scene?

**Kent:** It doesn't feel like there is much happening in Atlanta right now. If people keep supporting the scene and demanding more interesting music, it's going to happen. The bands who want to do it need to be given the environment. Clubfoot got a lot of help from the Now Explosion and clubs like the Celebrity Club. There's a very strong need for that right now.

**Rick:** It seems like there is a growing interest in dance music; a larger crossover that's providing more of an environment to experiment and do new things. There's a lot happening in Atlanta right now with underground Hip-Hop, believe it or not. Many new artists are putting stuff out that most people don't hear because it's not in demand, or people aren't going to local dance clubs.

**Andy:** Do you see yourself integrating more with Atlanta's Hip-Hop subculture?

**Kent:** Yes. They seem to be doing a great deal with music. They seem to enjoy music and want to party with music, which is what it should be about.

**Andy:** At this point in your progression, do you perceive a clear goal for all the visuals and electronics?

**Kent:** There's lots of hardware and software being speculated upon, and as money can afford will let us do the types of audio and visual manipulations we want to do once the stuff is there, working through the bugs, learning how to use it. It has gotten to a point where you can't buy it and instantly pick it up and do it. Sometimes it's a pain in the ass, the whole computer industry. We're relying a lot on these little disks these days, and it's not a perfect format.

**Andy:** So in a sense, Flatbush is going to be limited not by its creative or motivational energies, but by acquiring and mastering the technology.

**Kent:** Yeah. We could go back to playing our keyboards in a conventional sense and do neat things with it; yet, there are new ways of making sounds. That's what Flatbush has always been about. Finding easier ways and learning how to use them. Even if we never master it, something always comes along and blows it away.

**Contact:**  
Flatbush  
c/o Kent Worley  
648 Berne St.  
Atlanta, Ga., 30312

# DEACON LUNCHBOX

interviewed by Bill Taft

I found Deacon Lunchbox Sunday afternoon in the sportsbook room at Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas. Sporting a rabbit's foot necklace, Deacon stared at the four giant TV screens through his novelty store "wacky glasses". He had been up for thirty hours straight, looked like walking muffler meat, and smelled worse. Between races I asked him these insightful questions.

**Bill Taft:** Do you have a pen or a pencil?

**Deacon Lunchbox:** Here. (He hands me a Caesar's Palace pen)

**BT:** Where did you get that?

**DL:** By the betting window. They give them away.

**BT:** What horse did you bet on?

**DL:** One and five in the ninth race at Aqueduct.

**BT:** Why did you pick those two?

**DL:** It's easy. I look at the odds and wait for a feeling to hit me. Kind of like jock itch.

The race starts and we sit back in our chairs and watch it on the giant TV screen. Deacon loses but so what. The horses are still running at Gulfstream.



BT: Where did you learn to bet on the horses?

DL: The only thing I know about horse racing I got from a Bukowski book. The number one rule is the crowd always goes home broke so bet the long shot.

BT: Aside from the last race how has your luck been so far.

DL: I was doing well till last night when I literally got screwed out of two hundred dollars.

BT: What has been the biggest pay off.

DL: The sixth horse in the seventh race at Aqueduct. I brought home a winner at 20:1 odds.

In homage to Richard Petty, the stock car king, Deacon decides to use the back pocket strategy he's been saving all week.

BT: What is your back pocket strategy?

DL: I'm going to bet the four horse and the three horse in the seventh race at Gulfstream.

BT: Why the four and the three?

DL: Because Petty's car number is forty three, and four plus three equal seven and there are seven stars in Pleiades, the seven sisters.

BT: Are there numbers you avoid?

DL: Nines and ones because our Delta Flight number was 901. It was the worst flight of my life.

BT: When is post time for the seventh race?

DL: Right now.

And they're off at Gulfstream. Deacon pulls a plastic Jesus out of his pocket, holds it high in the air, and screams "get off the rail" at horse number three. Number four is bringing up the rear. Number three is running strong the first half mile but soon drops back in the pack and finishes fifth.

Deacon tears up his ticket and throws it on the floor and vows to win back all his losses in a concerted effort at the Blackjack table. If you want to know how Deacon did at Blackjack, you will have to ask him.



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Interviewed by Grace Braun

Mark is a member of Headache Weed. I first heard of Headache Weed as a band called Killing People which was on the LowLife compilation given away to subscribers to this magazine. I first met Mark through an ad in CreLoaf describing Killing People as being noisy, obnoxious, loud, inedible, etc.

**Grace Braun:** What's your last name?

**Mark:** My full name is Marc Vaughn Moore. I often have to check my driver's license to see how my middle name is spelled.

**GB:** How many people in Headache Weed?

**M:** Our membership is constantly fluctuating. Our bass player is a pothead and cannot play his instrument. Our drummer is joining the Armed Forces to plead our case to the enlisted man. Me and my friend Mike Paquet are the only constant members.

**GB:** Where did you get the name from? Why did you change from Killing People?

**M:** We changed from Killing People because no one in the band has ever been killed or killed anyone. We felt that Headache Weed reflected the dual nature of man; the blissful nirvana of stonedness, and the heartbreaking agony of seeds and stems.

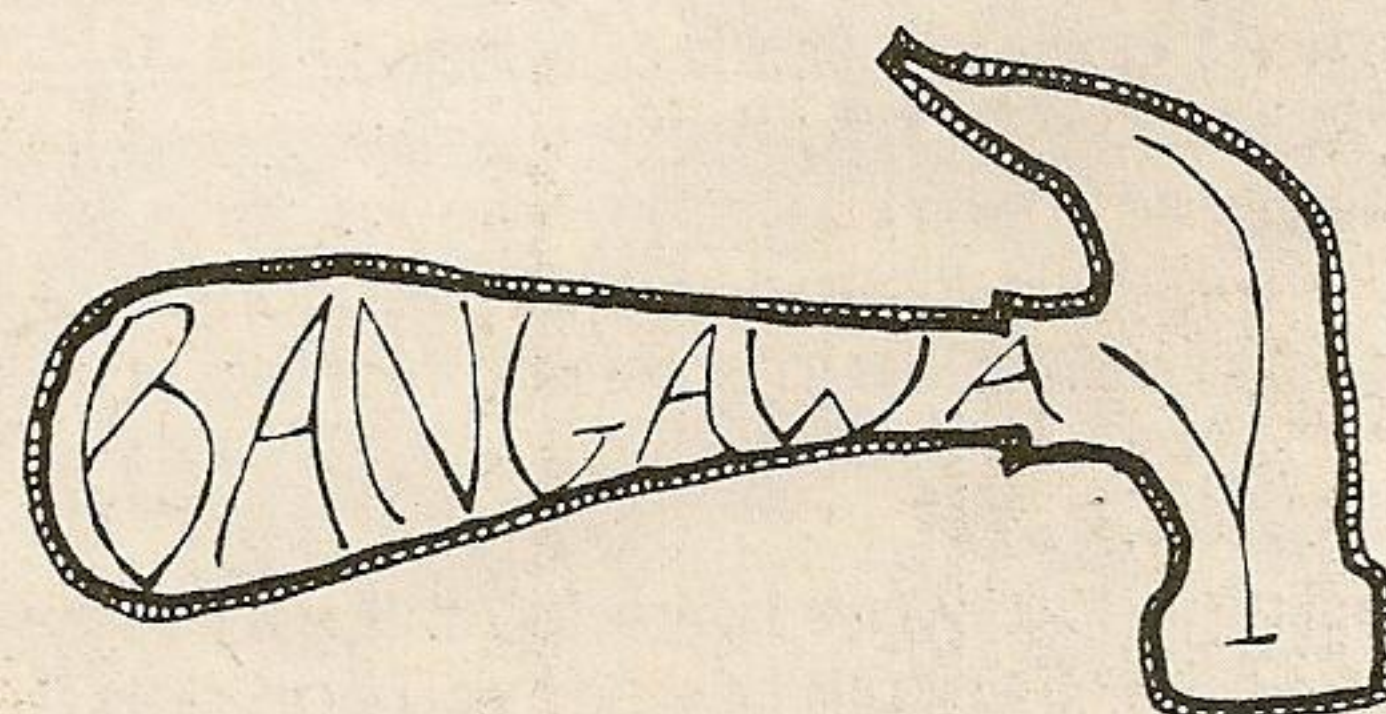
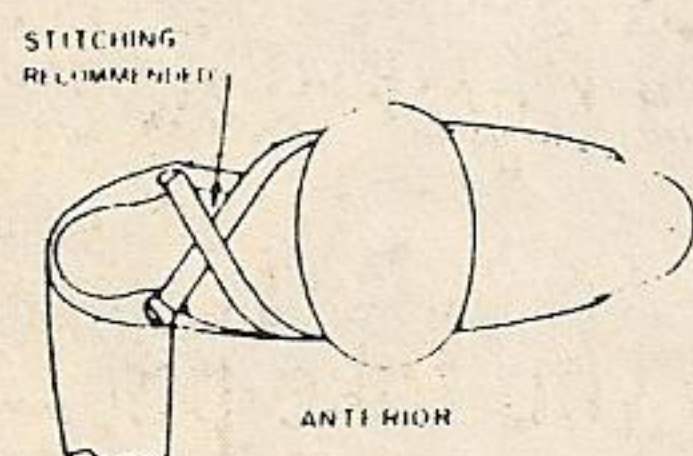
**GB:** How did you begin to really be a band?

**M:** We began to really be a band when we realized there was a void that needed to be filled. While all of Atlanta's bands are stupid, not one of them will come right out and say it. We are trying to bring our message of stupidity to a mass audience. Our crusade will soon take on global manifestations.

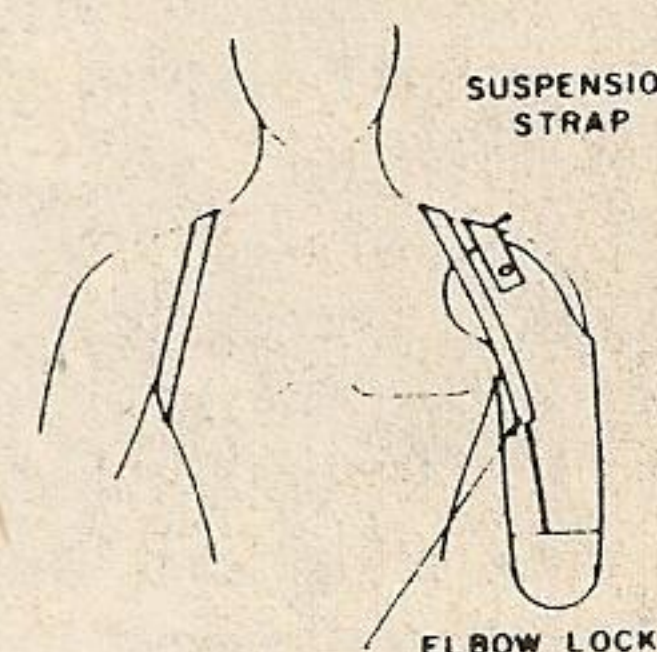
**GB:** How will we be hearing from you in the future? What kind of shows do you have planned? Where?

**M:** You will hear from me in the future participating with Headache Weed and with my own projects. As for shows, we are just waiting for the right offers (any) to come in. Someday I hope to be in a band that reflects the dance consciousness of the Stooges and the unbridled sexuality of Barry White and Half Japanese.

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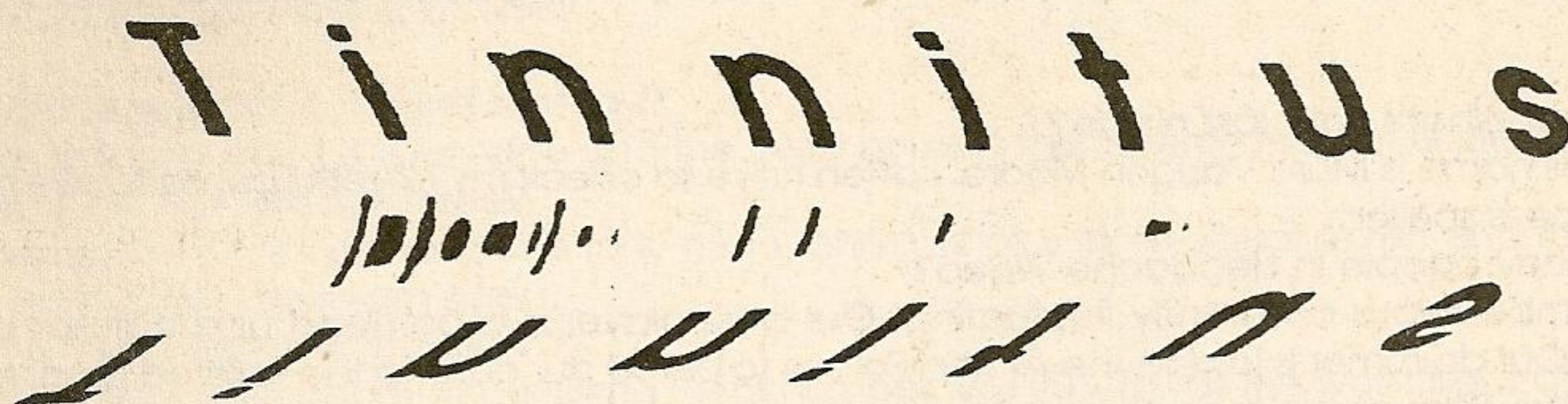


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**GB:** I hear you hit a dog...

**M:** We were speeding through the outskirts of Buford, Georgia. The dog's eyes met ours and the headlights as we proceeded to run over it. The dog's head became separated from its body. The body was in a ditch. The smooth coat of his fat belly reflected in the moonlight as a horrible reminder that it had once been alive. The front of my car was smashed. My right headlight sticks up in the trees when I drive as if I were patrolling for snipers.



**ROBERT CHEATHAM**  
interviewed by Lang Thompson

They play live infrequently and have only released a handful of cassettes but Tinnitus is a band, a collaboration rather, you should be paying attention to. Though they can kick up a freewheeling noisescreach with the best of them, Tinnitus isn't just another cacophony-worshipping bunch of timid experimentalists. They're always doing something different whether placing musicians at unusual places in the auditorium or creating really odd chunks of sound. (They prefer "sound fields" instead of "music"). I set out this January to interview Robert Cheatham, Tinnitus' main force, but since he's an unusually articulate and thoughtful person the entire experience was more a digressive monologue. Robert has a fascination with ideas that most people would shy away from and he draws freely from the likes of Baudrillard, Deleuze and Guattari, Lyotard, Joseph Beuys, etc. We started by discussing a then-upcoming project at Georgia Tech.

**Robert Cheatham:** It's like music but there are no instruments; it's all conceptual: slide projectors, prerecorded tapes, human speakers. Part of what I'm exploring is that line between spontaneity and planned action, between music and visual sorts of things.

**Lang Thompson:** Do you want to explore that further?

**R.C.:** I'd like to even if simply because there are more venues for a partly visual event than for a purely auditory/musical event. I've kind of moved in that direction because as you get older some things become more interesting and others less interesting. Not less valid certainly but your interests change.

**L.T.:** How do you stay interested?

**R.C.:** In doing something interesting you always have to, as Lacan says, speak beyond what you know. That way you're always pulled to the limits of what you can do.

**L.T.:** Does Tinnitus have a fairly stable lineup?

**R.C.:** Richard Gess and Laura Ackerman have been the people I've been collaborating with for the past year. Richard has been very instrumental in shaping some of my ideas. I came across him by accident: He had put an ad in *Creative Loafing* about wanting to play with people who like Albert Ayler, Ornette Coleman, Cecil Taylor. We played then more free jazz-type stuff than what we're doing now. Lately I've been more interested in release/containment, in that line between setting up structures and letting them take over on their own. That's what's usually called "monstrosity" when part of yourself gets lost in a system then comes back in a transfigured form. You have to deal with it in some way but you don't really have the equipment. What I've been interested in with the music is kind of quasi-religious; it's not necessarily entertainment. People might find it entertaining or not; mostly I don't find it very entertaining for myself. You set up the "machine", the structure, in such a way that when you put something in, you're never exactly sure what's going to come out or where it's going to circulate through the system. In fact, Richard and I used to hook up our equipment in such a way that when you pushed a pedal you were never sure if you were allowing yourself to play or prohibiting him from playing or linking them together. You had to deal with that on an almost non-cognitive basis. The attempt is to kind of lose yourself into this electronic network. The intriguing thing about the network is that if it's not happening for you in a musical sense there's still material fed in so you can step back until you feel it. The machine "carries" you over those movements when musicians have to slack off.



L.T.: Have you read William Gibson?

R.C.: Yeah, I like Gibson very much. That's a very fertile area for science fiction right now. I've tried to incorporate some of Baptist theology and just theology in general not in a real sense but in thinking about how humans use a sublated form of religion. Even the most atheistic people are still sort of Christian: they were born in the Western world, they still use Christian terminology, they still act as if there is a central arbitrator for ethics. Hence my interest in Heidegger.

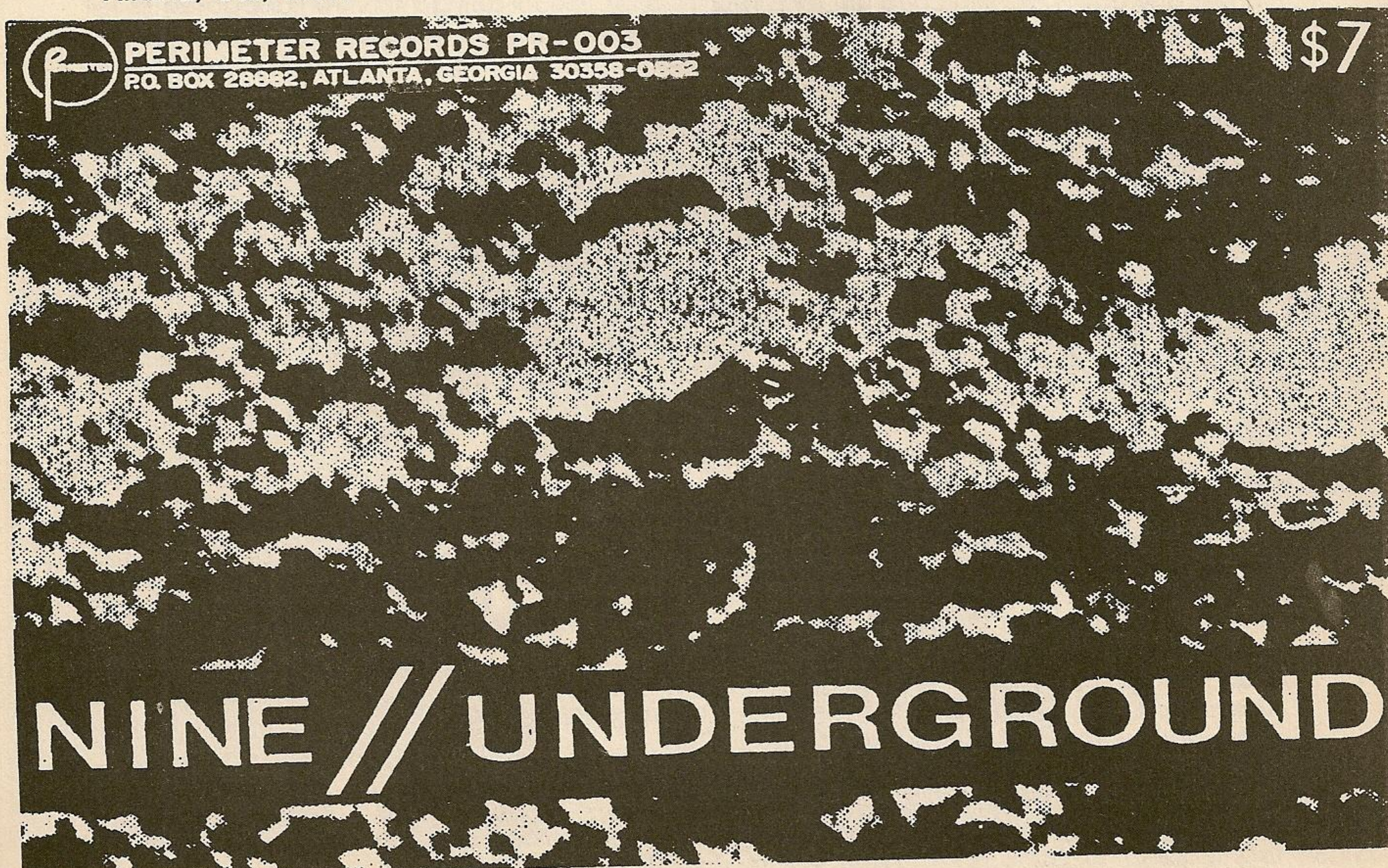
L.T.: How do you see this as religious?

R.C.: With machines and computer technology you might have faux religious experience, some sort of communion from getting caught up in the very rapid give and take. The machine may give us some kind of religious experience but it doesn't now. Getting in a car at night driving 100 mph down the expressway is kind of a spiritual experience. That's the closest some people come to being on the edge of losing oneself into some greater sort of phenomena. That phenomena being an opaque, slippery, nongraspable event. That's what I want to explore is the boundary between that and graspable events. You could go off the deep end with body mutilations and such. Still, I don't think it's like the New Age people do: that's an experience that can be deliberately called up and then dealt with. I don't think our performances evoke those opaque events. I try to make the performance as opaque as possible so it fragments audience attention and consequently people will take different things from it. People will always make sense of something but if you fragment it enough they create different things from the fragments. The effect is that there's a central mystery, that there's an occultation of something happening at the center of it that nobody really grasps. I don't know that what we do has that effect on people but I'm not sure that matters. All the audience may perceive is that there's an event that doesn't make any sense, which is fine.

L.T.: What attracts you about Ayler?

R.C.: It's hard for me to see Ayler's music being readily assimilable into a commercial culture. That's another reason why I'm interested in doing opaque events. I don't think it can ever be unassimilable to the hyper-real media culture which can handle the event in different ways. It can encapsulate it and pass it through the system as some peculiar art artifact or it can just excrete it through the system and not pay attention at all.

Contact Tinnitus  
c/o Fort! da?  
522 Harold Ave.  
Atlanta, Ga., 30307







# Phantom 309

interviewed by Glen

Photos by E. McG.

It doesn't take long to count the Atlanta rock bands that have ever meant much to me... Well, Phantom 309 is another one of them. It is not virtuoso playing that distinguishes this band from the pack. Nor is it amazing stage presence that'll make you notice them. These kids play simple head smash rock and roll as if they don't know what else to do. And it's not as if they were novices to the field. Their various backgrounds give no hint of what this band sounds like. Mac used to play drums in 86 and guitar (I think) in At Rest. A long time ago John sent me a tape from Florida called *Walking Stick Canary* and a note saying he was moving to Atlanta. Four years later and he shows up screaming his guts out in the coolest grunge noise rock band since Mr Phelps at least. Gary is a rock god who needs no introduction. Phantom 309 has a new EP called *Sinister Alphabet* coming out on Tupelo any day now, with cover art by Edward Gorey. The following interview is supposed to tell you everything else you will want to know.

**Glen:** So you just recorded a record?

**John:** Yeah.

**Glen:** How did you get Jon Langford to produce it.

**John:** Gary knew him from doing some album and asked Langford to come over and do it. Langford said "yeah".

**Gary:** The Mekons were on tour. As long as I could fly him from New Orleans to New York and drive him from Nashville to New Orleans, he said he'd do it for free basically.

**Glen:** Did you change your sound going into the studio?

**John:** I was really surprised. I thought they might try to clean it up in the studio, but they were really free about it. In fact, they encouraged us to be louder and wilder. We recorded it live. I did scratch vocal tracks, and then I went back into the bathroom and did the other ones.

**Mac:** That was cool John was in the bathroom like the old days. We couldn't see him or anything.

**Glen:** Why did you sing in the bathroom?

**John:** Because of the acoustics, you know, that 1950's style. It was like a country studio, where the people that ran the studio were in the Mandrells.

**Gary:** Lynn Anderson does her demo work there.

**Glen:** I want to talk about the history of this band. A lot of people I know claim to be former members.

**Gary:** Tim Lane Seaton would claim now to have been a member of the band.

**John:** He played with us for two times.

**Gary:** He was pretty ashamed.

**Glen:** Also Chris Verene claims to have been a drummer for the band.

**John:** No! But I jammed with Chris a couple of times.

**Glen:** Tell me how *Walking Stick Canary* came about?

**John:** Yeah. You know Geoff Dugan, right?

**Glen:** Yes.



**John:** Well, I met him down in Florida, and he got me into playing with the multi-track. So I got this multi-track and turned on the dish washer, and beat on the piano and beat on everything I could find, just from talking to him and hanging around with him. I'd go over to his house, and he'd be listening to like albums of chainsaws running, stuff like that, which I'd never heard before up to that time.

**Glen:** So is that you singing on that tape.

**John:** That's me singing.

**Glen:** The vocal style is not quite the same.

**John:** No. It's gotten a little rougher.

**Glen:** Did you just smoke a lot of cigarettes?

**John:** Yeah, this is like my third pack of the day today.

**Glen:** So despite everyone claims has this pretty much has been the lineup all along?

**Gary:** It kind of formed in Little Five Points when we played outside Fellini's: Bill Taft, John and I. We were just hitting trashcans...

**John:** It was the first warm day of spring and we were just sitting there hitting, and there was a bunch of people standing around, and we were yelling shit...

**Gary:** We did "Summertime Blues" for ten minutes.

**John:** Then all of a sudden a cop came up and told us we'd be arrested so we got a gig at The Point. And we played at The Point, and it seemed like there were a bunch of people standing around banging on stuff that night. Then we played once again, and Gary and Tim Seaton and I played.

**Gary:** It kind of came out of Zulu Junk, which was Bill Taft's street percussion band. It was at the end of that.

**Glen:** So Tim Seaton did actually play with you.

**Gary:** He played with us twice: once at the White Dot and one of the two shows we did at The Point, and he even practiced like with us twice. But from the start he really didn't want to be in it.

**Glen:** So when did you switch over to bass from drums?

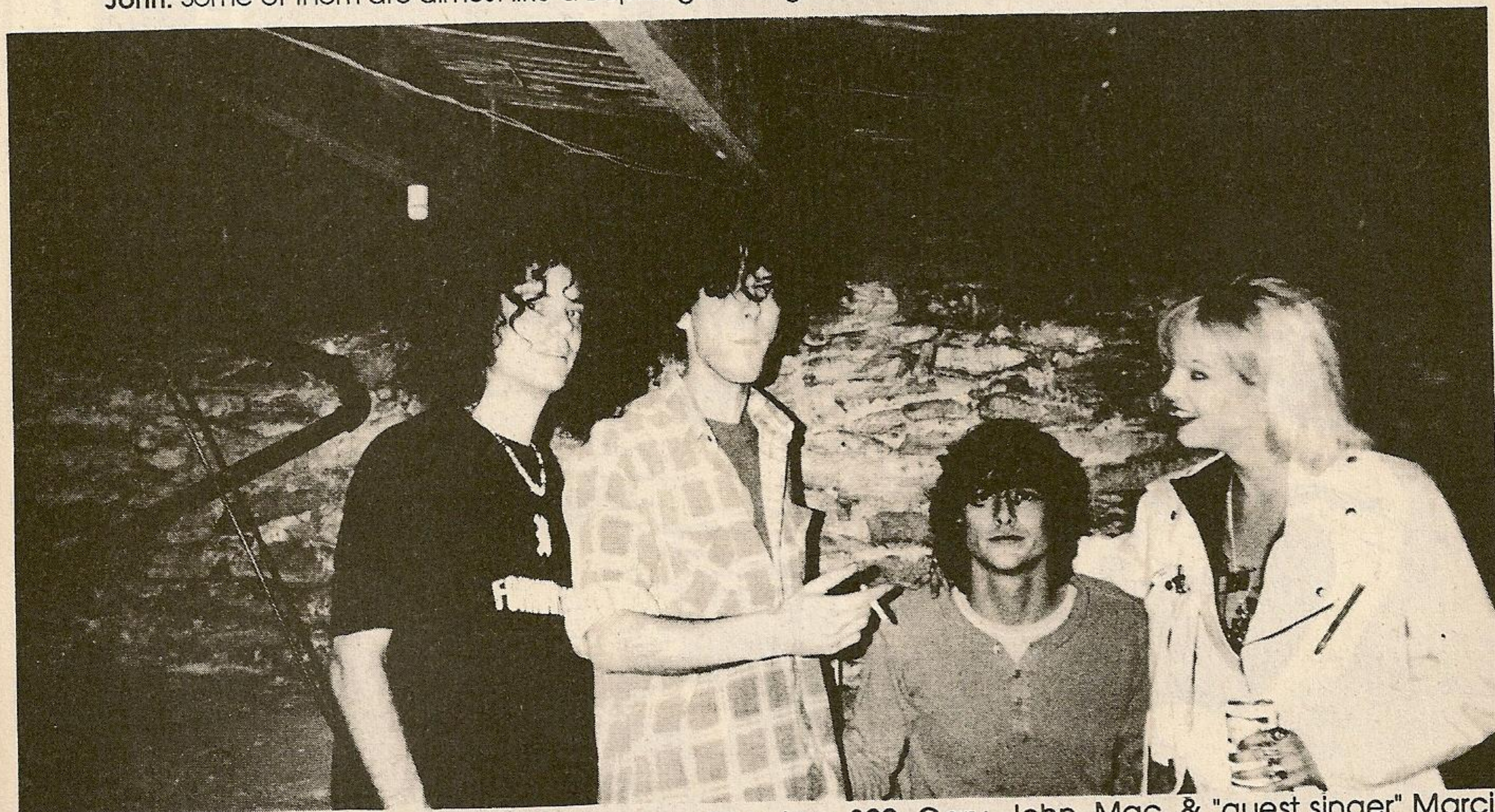
**Mac:** I was really just going to help these guys out for a couple of gigs they had lined up. Gary knew that I kind of fooled around on bass. So he just said, I could learn a few songs so we can do a couple of gigs. We did it, and it was a lot of fun, and it worked out better than we all expected. It sort of stuck.

**Glen:** Your bass seems like a really important part of it. I can't imagine the band with Tim Seaton in it.

**Gary:** He would play with one hand and sit there and smirk at me like saying "I'm really fucking bored." He just thinks that rock music is real simplistic, and it is. He's one of the best bass players I've ever heard, and he thinks playing rock music is beneath him. He can do it, no doubt, but he won't do it. He did it for two gigs with us, and it nearly killed him.

**Glen:** So what are your songs about? I can't understand any of the words.

**John:** Some of them are almost like a Baptist guilt thing. Whenever I start thinking about it.



Phantom 309: Gary, John, Mac, & "guest singer" Marci



**Glen:** (To Mac) So whatever happened to that live record that was supposed to come out of that 19 hour last 86 show?

**Mac:** It's going to come out.

**Gary:** It's going to be the last Twilight record, actually.

**Mac:** We didn't know that show was going to be as long as it turned out to be, which was two and a half hours actually. Roger Miller was supposed to do the middle set, and we were going to do two sets, but then they said Roger Miller was going to go on 1st, and we were going to do just one set. We said, "Well this is the last time we're going to play so..."

**Gary:** They did 41 songs.

**Mac:** I admire anyone who could sit through that, seriously, even if you're into it.

**Gary:** I passed out drunk for the final three songs.

**Mac:** I respect anyone that was there at the end.

**Glen:** I frankly couldn't tell after a while, did you play all different songs?

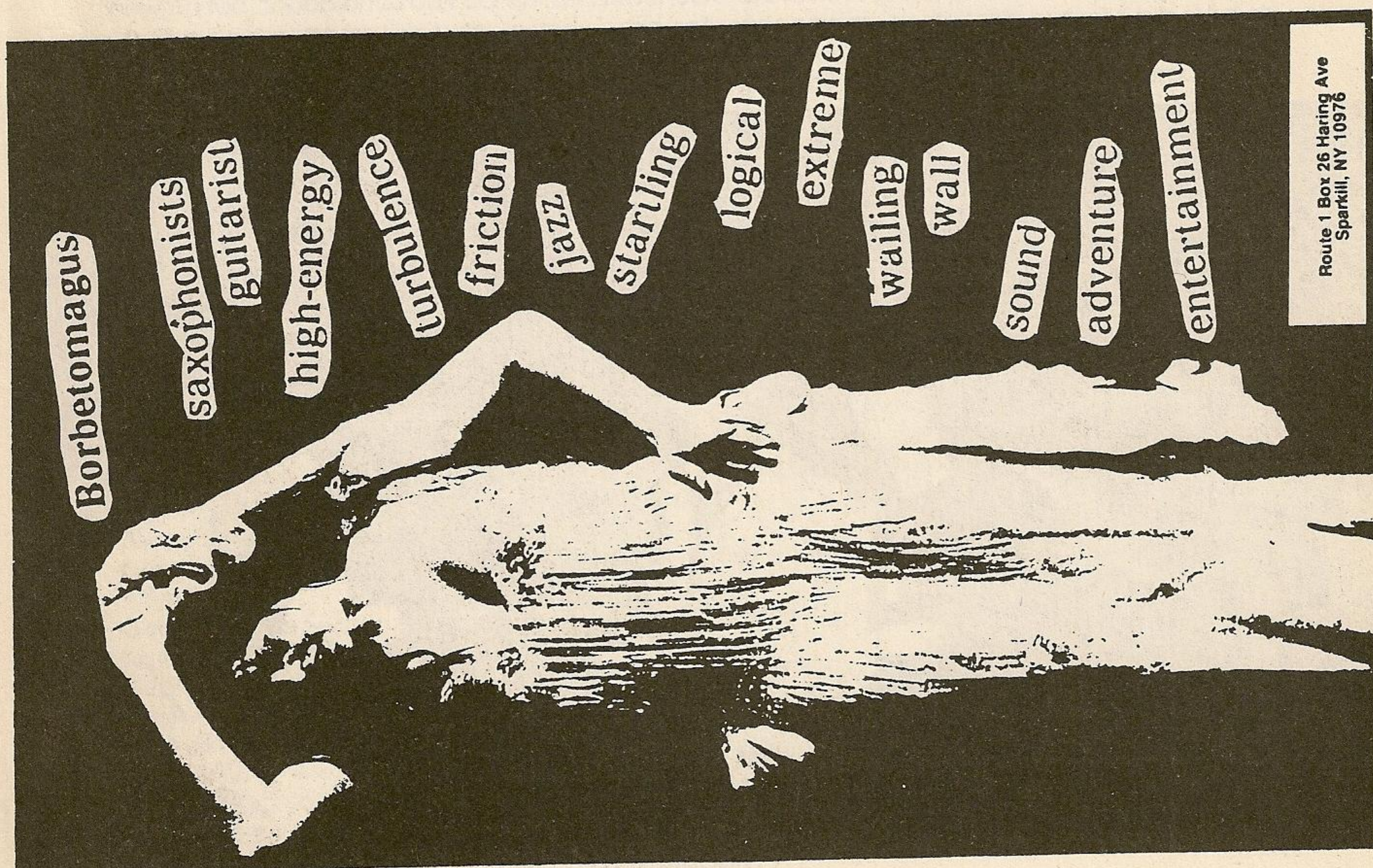
**Mac:** We didn't repeat a one. We left out a couple, actually. We'd been doing it for years, so we definitely had a back log and wanted to get it all on tape. We had the Mobile Truck, and it came out really nice. We invariably without meaning to left out a few songs, but it was just as well. Two and a half hours is enough.

**Glen:** So have you been in other bands.

**Gary:** Kind of... It's kind of like everybody always wishes I was a better drummer. I'm getting better now. Before people were hoping because I could put there record out. I think I was the 1st drummer in Shades of Shame and lasted about right up till the week they played their first show. Then I was the first drummer in the Ellen James Society. I played with them for about six months. Named them... It was actually kind of a joke, but they took it seriously and still have the name.

**Glen:** So you finally found a band bad enough to keep you.

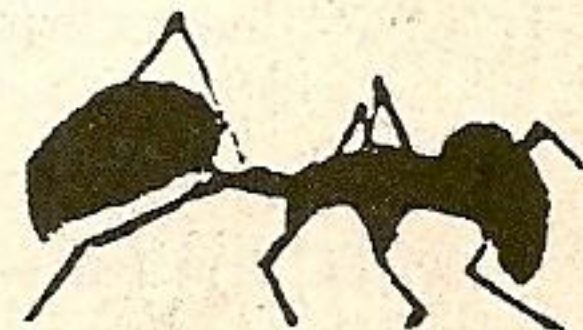
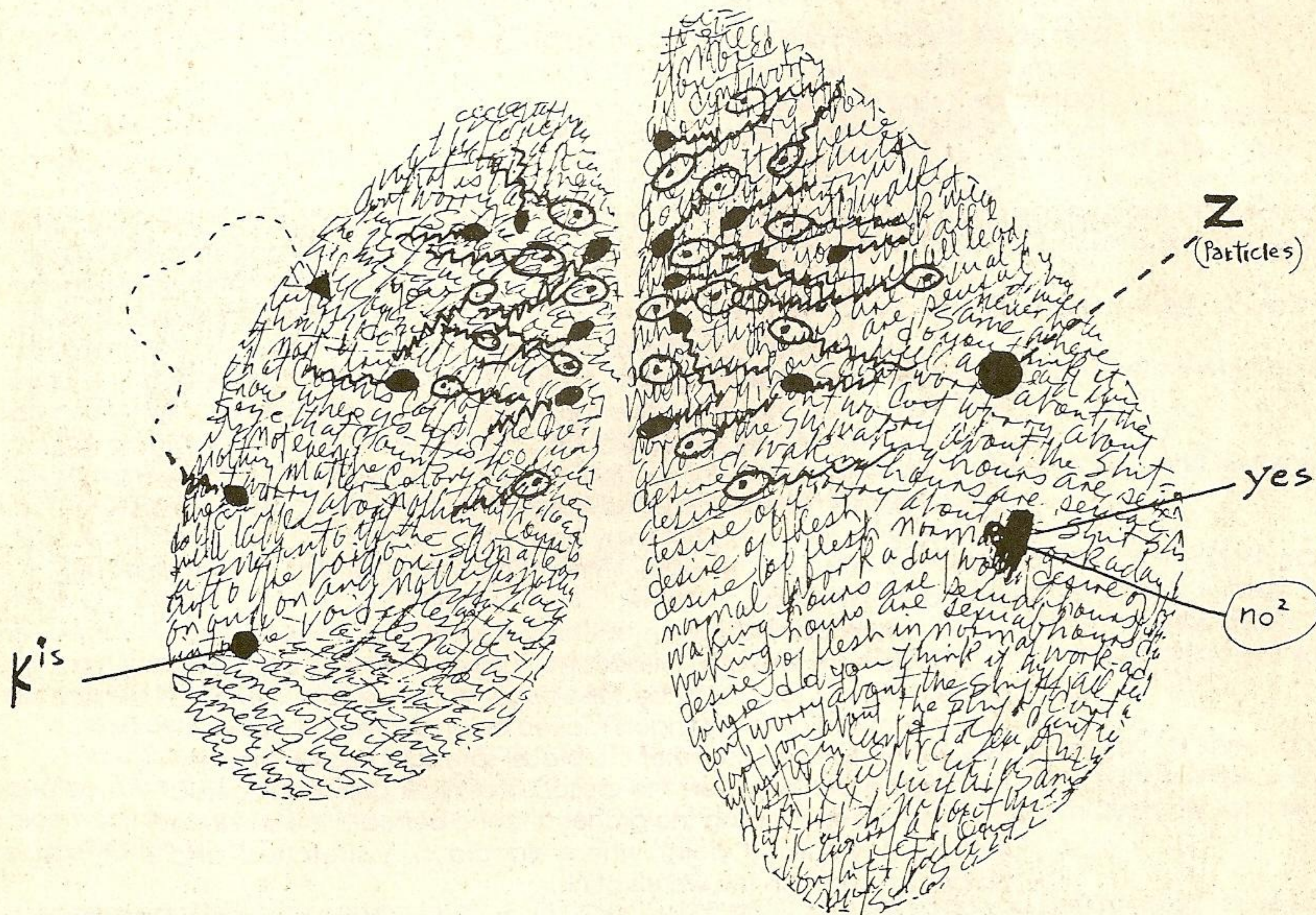
**Gary:** Right.





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yes yes ritual substance  
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Don't be  
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My ~~uncle~~ ~~brother~~ :-  
Don't worry about ->  
Just it will be  
publicly like  
~~the~~ ~~man~~ on  
Keep on dancing  
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The spit on the sidewalk is evaporating. The bubbles trapped inside of it are bursting, pressed down by the weight of heat and time. The spit will be gone before I am eye level with it, sucked up by greedy bits of air. I am sinking into a hole, a hole my size, a size for me. I don't know how it got here. I

## CRUX

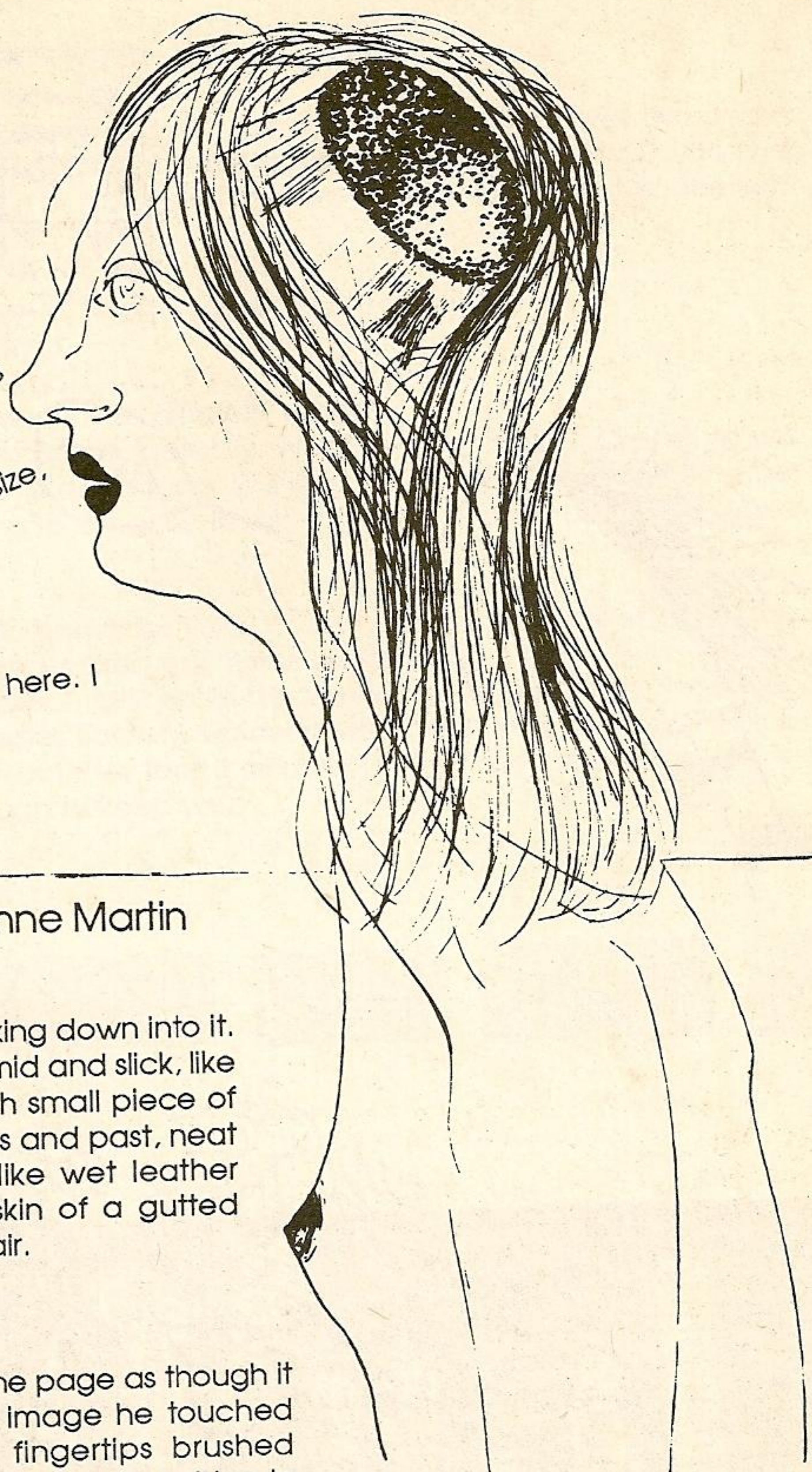
by Dea Anne Martin

don't care because I am sinking down into it. The mud in the hole feels humid and slick, like mucus, as it slips across each small piece of my skin. It slides up my ankles and past, neat as socks, then, it tightens like wet leather thrown into the sun... the skin of a gutted animal stretched out to the air.

He stroked the page as though it were wet flesh. The image he touched grew warm as his fingertips brushed across it. he pressed the soft cushion in the middle of the lower lip and felt air spread across the surface of his hand. as the image pulsed on its flat shiny page, it gave off a sweet viscous smell that reminded him of sap or clams.

He imagined pulling up the lowered eyelids to see what was hidden underneath. Instead, he nudged the hard, oiled flesh of the left shoulder and traced the ridge of the clavicle leaving a faint trail of lipstick as his fingers moved down to pinch a nipple. he thought about the surface of the breast spreading across his palm and spilling out between the crotches of his fingers. he lingered over the ribcage feeling the arches of bone beneath the skin then moved down to a point where flaccid skin stretched and hardened beneath the whorls of his.

"I don't know what I like best about you," he said. "Your tits or your dick."





The image swiveled its head through the nearly invisible grain of photograph until it was looking at him its eyes hooded but open.

"I feel like a flower," it said.

He put the palm of one hand flat against the slick page. he drew the middle finger of the other hand up the underside of his cock toward the tip. He felt the desperate pressure of lips against the pillow of his hand. He felt come sliding like glue across the skin sheathing his knuckles.

The imperative of your love wrapped around me like thin wire until I was a silent bleeding vessel. Fucking is hypnotic. Fucking is a prison, and yet I want to open myself like a drop of oil on hot metal, to feel desire take its perfect shape and then dissolve leaving behind pulsing and the vacuum of its absence. Gravity pulls me down, away from you... from what I want. A one armed man passes me carrying a newspaper pressed tight between his stump and his side. he is wearing a sleeveless shirt. The front of the shirt says "We Are Your Overlords". Tattoos decorate the skin of the stump. There are son many tattoos that I can't tell the color of the real skin underneath. I want to hole the stump, to feel the truncation cradled in the cup of my hand. the man passes by. He doesn't see me.

She held the object balanced across her palm. The label said:

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Then in smaller letters: This product is safety-sealed for your protection.

She could see color through the plastic wrapping, an uneven rosy brown resolving into dimmed violet at the knobbed end. She took the wrapping off peeling it from one end to the other. Stripped of its envelope, the object felt warm in her hand and the heat of her own flesh seemed to make it grow warmer. A vein throbbed beneath the dusky surface and met her finger as she pressed down.

"Come on," said the other. "put it on already."

She looked at it.

"No."

Holding it in both hands, she put the purple tip to her lips. Then she placed it on the table, its tip pointing north. She leaned over it and swayed repeating a swooning series of words that filled the air for hours.

The dream I had was this. The woman standing next to me smelled like sour milk. We were standing in a parking lot pressed together by the crowd surrounding us. I could smell the stale scent of other bodies but it was vague, a sketch overpowered by the odor of the woman. It was night and we stood walled off from the darkness by a pool of light that flooded down unanchored from a source above our heads. The lights bleached and creased the woman's skin. Skin hung from the bony edges of her chin like emptied balloons glued there for a joke.

"If someone you desired died," she said. "Would you eat them? Would you imagine them whole in front of you as you devoured each separate piece of flesh?"

She stared straight ahead as though she were asking the air these questions. There were tears running down the wrinkles in her face.

"I'm sorry," she said. "I've already been waiting a long time today."

A man was shouting for attention at the front of the crowd. He wasn't wearing a shirt, and his large stomach looked soft enough to scoop up like melon from the cavity of his pelvis.

"Okay!" he yelled. "It's ready!"

Suddenly I was standing in front of the silent crowd. I was looking at a newspaper box. the glass was clouded and opaque and steam seeped through cracks in the metal. The fat man opened the door. A heavy, oily smell saturated the air and hunger opened inside of me like a yawn. The woman who smelled like milk was standing next to me chewing. Grease dripped out of the corners of her mouth and down her wattles making them shine. She was thrusting a burnt piece of meat at me.

"Take some," she insisted. "We loved him a lot."

You existed before there were words to describe you, to lock your shape into place. My knees are gripped by mud that pulls at my skin like shackles and all I can think of is you in my mouth put there by practiced hands, mine or the hands of others. You in my mouth, dissolving and running through my veins like water up through roots.

There's a place you can go for that. It's called Table and that's like what you get up onto. You're up there laid out like a banquet, and then this machine? Well it feels like some kind of plastic thing with an electric spinal cord, so it's stroking you and you're getting hotter and hotter and you can hear all these voices discussing you and maybe at first arguing who's going to be the one to come down and fuck you and them maybe agreeing that everyone'll just share but you can't see them because of the blindfold, right? The one that they make you put on and the door shuts and locks behind you and there you are



about the vein sheathed in pale skin beating out a blue signal of desire, how it felt to brush the surface with the tip of a needle and feel the skin roll off of my body and stretch out, extending itself to millions of molecules that touch it like kisses until the edges fray and it loses its shape completely. Blood spills out of my stripped, discarded muscles. Bones bend and finally break under the weight of swollen flesh.

I had wanted not to stop. What I had hoped for was what I see in the sky, an ancient star shoving light through my pores, a star that will be dead someday, but only after me.

The sound of her heels filled his ears as she walked away. he heard a cigarette lighter snap and was instantly flooded with dread and hope that she would come back and brand him in the orderly, symmetrical way that she preferred. he heard the sudden sound of running water and the rasp of a zipper and it was then that he felt the weight of his chains. He had heard something once, a line from a book maybe... he wasn't sure, and he had kept it to himself like a talisman, "mired in pain, confronting nothingness, freedom is known."

"It's closer," he thought. "Because of her." The blood on his back was drying, sticky red lace painting skin that had been smooth less than half the time that he had been alive.

His head hung forward like fruit on a tree. She combed his hair with her fingers and squeezed. Her knuckles touched his scalp. She tugged his head back. His wet, shielded eyes pointed unfocused at her face like a pair of dead beacons.

"What do you see?" she asked. "What is it that you know?"

She put the palm of her hand against the burning flesh of his cheek. The beauty of the face that she held in her hands was something that she had never seen. It was like a porcelain mask. Locked up in a dissolution that she couldn't know, the face was opaque. It told her nothing. Desire stained with fear exploded the walls of her cells.

"Don't leave me," she said.

She put her hand flat against his chest. Ribbons of blood skated across her skin. She held one of his nipples between her fingers and twisted it to the right. His eyes, floating in their private oceans, became transparent, washed clean and lucid, searing her with the secrets that washed out with his tears.

There are memories that penetrate this dull, sad fog like a nail hammered into a muscle... the sound of a heart pumping in its cage, a pair of lips forming the shapes of words in silent darkness, the dry, dying smell of a lover's skin. I remember the last time that I rode on a bus. The bus was filled with people. Each body was an oasis to me in a desolate waste of air. I wanted to crawl, on my knees, to each one and drink.

My neck is anchored into place. When I turn my head to the left, I see the smashed and mangled body of a pigeon wrapped in tangles of cassette tape. The plastic housing of the tape clings to the concrete like an empty wallet.

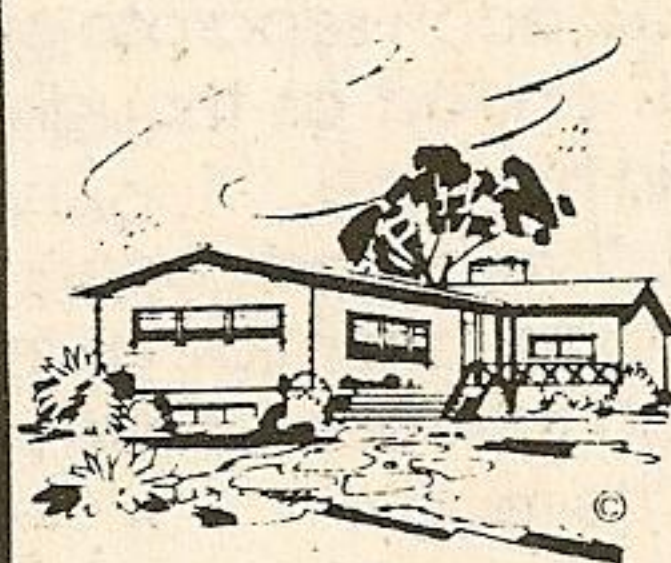
Poor bird.

c. 1988

Hey, Buddy, would you like to purchase some chemicals?



like wow man, that was some good shit. got anymore?



Honey!  
I'm Home

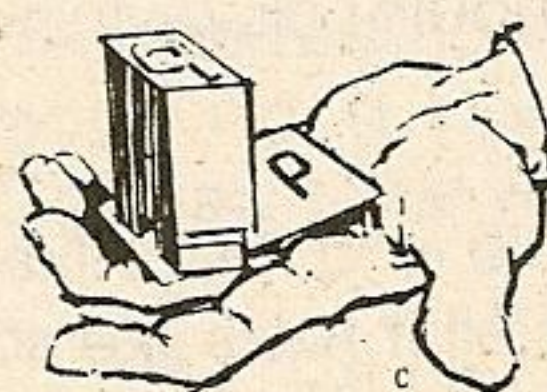
I've got  
a little something  
for us.



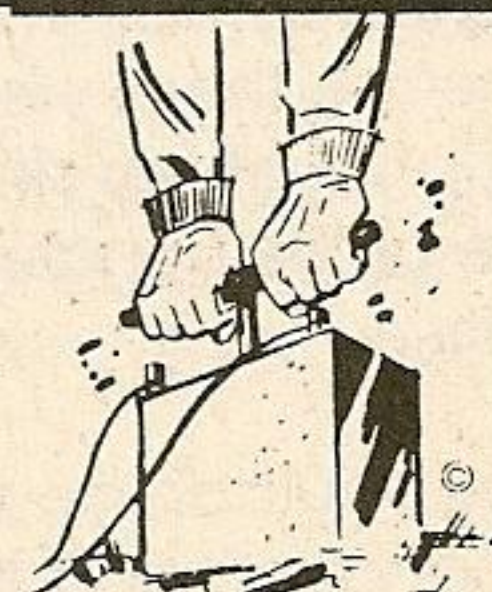
That sounds  
like Steve,  
I bet he has  
some chemicals



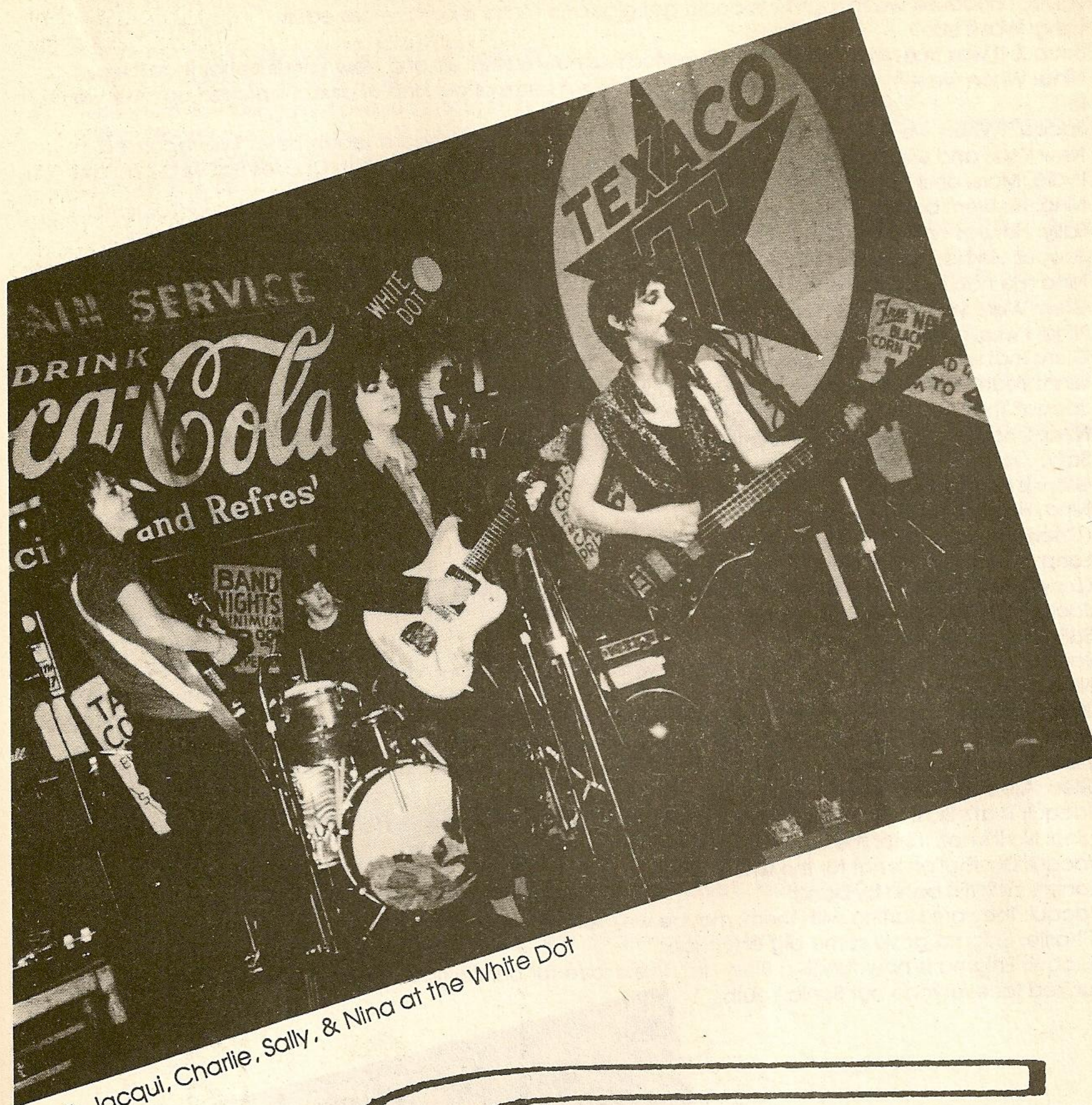
Here baby, try one  
of these Big P's first



oooh! Steve those  
were a BLAST!  
give me more.







Ut: Jacqui, Charlie, Sally, & Nina at the White Dot

**One** of the best rock bands the US has ever bred has barely been seen on these shores for the better part of the decade. But recently Ut drifted through on a brief tour of the US, and Atlanta was privileged to be one of their few stopping points. Over the years the group has amassed quite a pile of fine records. Their self titled first EP came out in '84. Then in '85 came *Confidential*, the Tim Hodgkinson produced *Conviction* in '86, a live album, *Early Live Life* in '87, and most recently the great double EP, *In Guts House*. There is a new album on the way from Blast First soon. When they were in town Nina, Jacqui, Sally and Charlie (their most recent member) agreed to talk to Lang Thompson, Ellen, and myself. Some of that conversation follows:



Glen: Why did you move to England.

Jacqui: Because we thought we could get gigs and make records more easily.

Lang: Was it true?

Jacqui: It was true, yeah. It's just that America has now woken up and New York is better than it was.

Nina: When we left nothing was really happening in terms of our kind of music. It picked up after we left.

Jacqui: When we left here there were just no independent record labels here. We recorded in New York, and we actually had a single that was about to come out with Charles Ball who had did Lydia, Mars, and Television, but he totally fucked up...

Nina: He went bankrupt and ran off.

Sally: He was an infamous character.

Jacqui: He had recorded everybody, and he had put out Mars and Lydia.

Nina: He had good taste.

Glen: Were you in bands before Ut?

Nina: I was, a little bit. I was in a band called the Gynecologists.

Glen: That was with Rhys Chatam?

Nina: Yeah with Rhys Chatam, and I've played with Rhys in his guitar bands and stuff.

Jacqui: That name sort of gives the wrong impression.

Nina: Charlie was also in a band with a name that links with that one.

Sally: ...called the Whores

Glen: Is he ashamed?

Nina: He's not ashamed at all.

*(Charlie is suspiciously quiet on the subject)*

Lang: Where did the name Ut come from?

*(Lang obviously had not read the Blast First press material on Ut, oh well!)*

Jacqui: We thought it meant action.

Sally: It came from the Dictionary.

Jacqui: It said "do" next to it. We thought it was "dü", but it meant "doe" like "doe ray me".

Nina: It had a musical meaning, and we didn't realize it.

Jacqui: When the scale was invented it was "ut" instead of "do", but we didn't know any of this.

Nina: It means all these great things in different languages. It's a heavy word. It's been around.

Ellen: For being so small.

Glen: Are you being distributed in the US by Enigma?

Jacqui: That's Blast First, but it's only for Sonic Youth and the Butthole Surfers.

Nina: No it's not. It's for the whole label, but that hasn't happened yet.

Jacqui: Distribution is not for the whole label.

Lang: I think it is band by band.

Jacqui: They are starting with them, maybe we'll reap the benefits later.

Charlie: Enigma gave some big advances.

Jacqui: Enigma is now funding Blast First. We'd love for our distribution to be much better, but it's fucked for everyone but Sonic Youth.



Ut: Nina, Jacqui, & Sally



Glen: Are you planning on moving back to the US?

Jacqui: Yeah.

Glen: Are you going to bring back him with you.

Nina: He wants to come with us.

Glen: Did you bring your own equipment. I noticed the case says "Band of Susans".

Nina: No we couldn't bring it. We begged and borrowed from everyone. There's a different band behind every piece of equipment onstage.

Jacqui: The tour is totally self financed. The record company is hardly helping.

Charlie: They didn't want us to come over...

Jacqui: Because our record was six months ago, and they couldn't get it together. They had a package they were going to send us on. But it kept falling through, so we said, "fuck you."

Charlie: At the moment Blast First is concentrating on the more accessible bands like Sonic Youth and Band of Susans. They are the one they're pushing.

Glen: What makes them more accessible.

Charlie: You tell us that!

Nina: They've managed to achieve this thing of being a big rock band, just by the way they look, the way they are on stage... It gives something that's very sellable.

Glen: It doesn't seem like you're so different to me. He (*points at roadie/friend of band whose name we forgot*) said you were a noise band.

Friend: No

Ellen: Yeah! you did.

Nina: We are noisy.

Charlie: I call it an argument band.

Jacqui: The noise thing came from Thurston calling his festival the Noise Fest.

Glen: He hates it if people call Sonic Youth a noise band now.

Nina: I bet.

Jacqui: It's such a reduction.

Nina: So we're not an anything band.

Jacqui: We go along with that like we went along with No Wave. We're all part of that same drift. Obviously we're different than other bands we get lumped with.

Glen: What do you think of the reviews you get that usually call you...

Sally: A girl band.

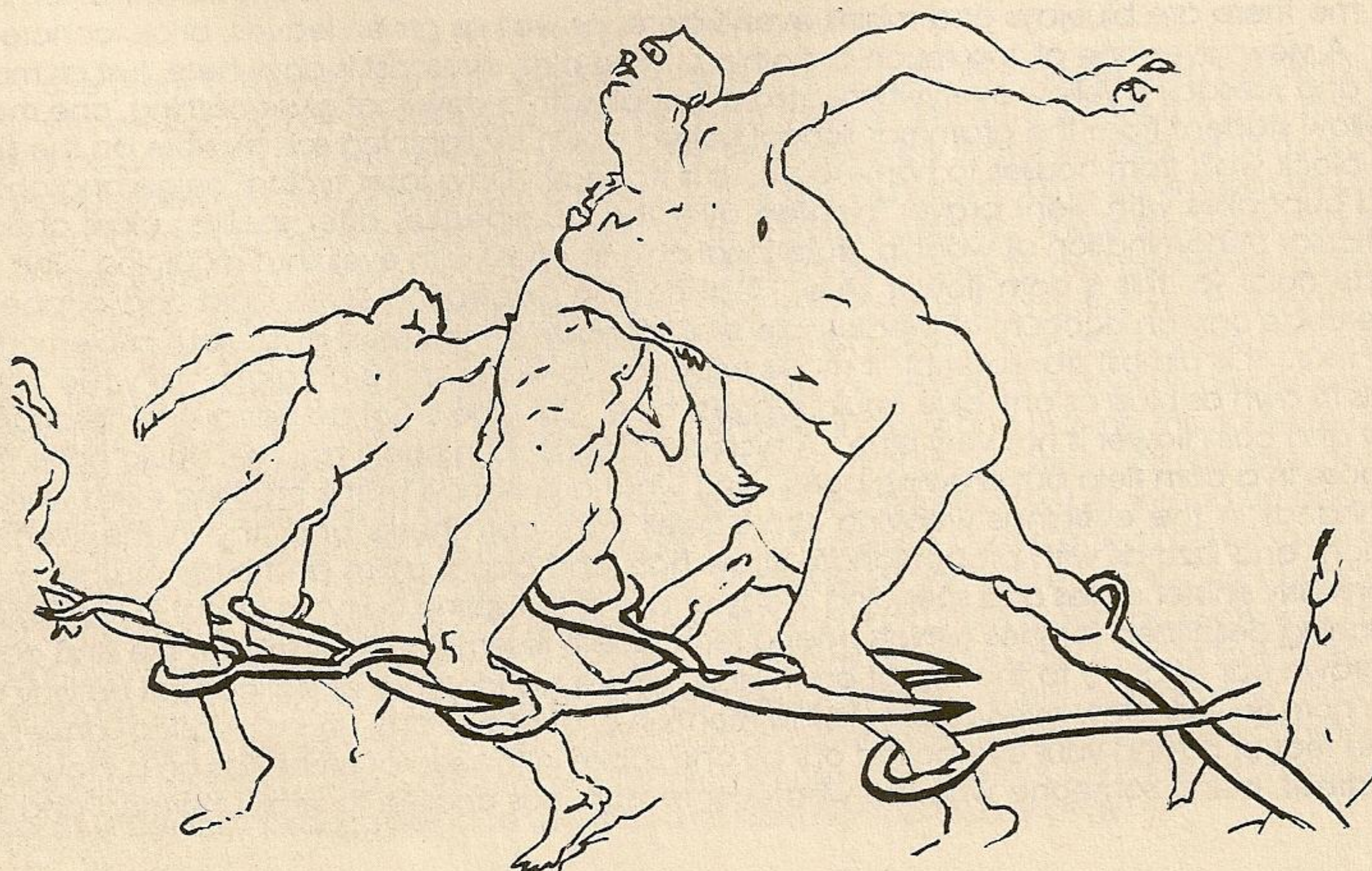
Glen: Yeah they always compare you to other bands with women in them.

Jacqui: Everyone does it.

Sally: They've even brought in Banarama.

Nina: Any girl band. We think we sound more like the Velvet Underground than the Slits. It's just pathetic.

Sally: We never thought, like, "let's be girls". We could easily be boys.





# T w e / v e O ' C l o c k E g y p t

by Tracy Terrill

There is a window with a washline. Sagging some though once taught twine between two broom poles. There is some wash on it. A composed row of small cotton things, baby clothes and pre-pubescent underwear. There is a plate of potatoes growing ripe in the window sill. There is a sofa against that wall with pastel blankets and bed pillows strewn about. Sit someone there, I dare you. There is no human figure or face, there is no mortal beauty to compare, that would begin to compare in my eyes to hung laundry anti-perched on a wire behind the silhouette, pocked and eyed, of a dish of Idaho's finest. It is an appreciation that I feel between my legs. So you see there is no reason to bring anyone inside these walls and rarely a good reason for me, myself, to leave them.

The only distinguishing life I remember ever being greeted by in the small hard dirt and trodden square of a yard before the building in which I live, are a bird and a notable amount of identical weeds. From this I deduce that they are somehow special partners in nature, two factors in a scientific equation which repeats itself at my threshold religiously, daily, that I am unable to translate, not ignorance on my part you see, merely a language barrier. There is soberly bound in a volume somewhere the table that might lay most, if not all, of my reveries to rest. But I don't get out much, that's the thing. It could be these weeds have a unique invertebrate drawing charm, for this bird I often see is always battling a wet rather fiery earthworm, thrashing its little head from side to side, looking me straight in the eye and backing away canine, not unlike a dog who guards with playful caution the fetch stick that by the essence of the game I am bound to reclaim. Think now little bird in terms of probability. Close your lids or stare blankly into space, whichever mannerism it is you employ to concentrate. Picture me, in every way your superior in size, and intelligence, clutching, tossing, and enticing back from your proud beak a snatch of what might as well be so many inches of my own entrails. It could be that you are a step in the pollination cycle of that familiar and abundant weed or as I would rather think, and do consider at least the more poetic hypothesis, that simply red birds are fond of yellow flowers, for even, and especially, simple minds stand amazed as a plot, neck to neck, of blossoms go from so many suns to so many moons.

Every beginning has a window. Every middle. Every end. It is common. Every window has a chair and every chair has a view. You see certainly by now that out this hole there is no clue, no word signs, no traffic, no indigenous landscape, and probably you know so little about birds that if one were to fly past, circle around and land on the windowsill with an arrogant spread of wings, a clear view of all markings, issuing the one and only cry elegant yet small-brained creatures are capable of, it would be useless, yes breathtaking, but irrelevant. We ignorant of ornithology assume there are bluejays and robins everywhere, as well as green leaves, brick, concrete, and dirt. A view gives one all too much or nothing. Nine a.m. overcast is anywhere, just as morning is wet and Tuesday is yellow everywhere. From a chair with a view that gives nothing, one morning is a fellow student from the grammar school bolted down by lightning somewhere on the three- to five-block walk from houses to homeroom. It is tragedy. Days later typical beige and chocolate iced cupcakes with silent prayer initiated over the loudspeaker after spelling class chagrin, no particular denomination of worship, traditional chin to chest with eyes shut mourning. The second grade color for this is corn flower blue. That crayon (excepting silver, gold and copper which supercede only on account of predictable sensationalism) is the most mysterious implement of the sixty four. It is almost transparent; it marks imposing as water stains on glass, yet while in the box holds its own as blue as any blue could suggest blue. But blue is not an adequate description of a view and corn flower is not very blue. A blossom lacking so in hue, I assume, could have no other purpose in a corn field but drawing bees. And what a nuisance that is creating extra work for the farmhands in the evenings weaving scare-bees from corn husks and hay in the likenesses of pythons and lizzards with proportionate straw hats and acorn pipes and glass marble eyes with ingeniously sinister stares and spending a day or two in the spring carrying about in feed sacks and attaching described fetishes (which bear a remarkable resemblance in shape, size and color to a full grown ear of corn) to the top of each stalk, where we ignorant of agricultural botany assume poor corn flowers grow everywhere, not to mention a lot of swatting and a constant anxiety similar to the fear of having your eye poked out by one spoke in the sea of umbrellas on a crowded rainy city street, being someone who, for whatever reason, has chosen to stroll unarmed and just get wet.



Between these walls you see certainly by now that I have a saintlike fondness for lonely souls. For things that have suffered. There is not one cup or dish that does not show evidence of being pieced and glued back together, not one article of linen or clothing that has not been adopted by me with the intent to mend or patch or simply relish in a permanent stain, not one rug without a run. There are severed branches from trees and pruned shrub limbs propped in the corners of my rooms, obsolete radiators gutted during renovation, cockeyed venetian blinds, weeds potted in soup cans lined along each windowsill, excepting one window where a slim white arched and eloquent can back sits silently, offering a view that gives nothing and remaining perfectly flawless.

I decided long ago that human beings were less than desirable companions. They take too much and give too much and use too many meaningless words in the process. I have never in any context easily used the word love. It is taken for either all too much or nothing. It or something like it slipped from my mouth once during a passionate moment, and though messy with ill pronunciation, consequently no witness, no proof that it was indeed the word in question exists, I felt for that second my virility dueling a Pacific undertow, I felt someone had secretly embroidered fancies into all of my underpants, enraged with trickery and a little queasy with freedom, I felt my fingertips caressing the insides of her forearms and myself whisper quite articulately this time and as involuntarily sincere as a delicate sneeze that it was like being in bed with two tiny dolphins. I felt her blush and could tell by the temperature of her skin that it was possibly the kindest thing anyone had ever said to her. If she were one direly inclined to save such moments in verse, there would exist now, handwritten in ink, stashed away somewhere, unmeasured, divided only into little clouds, her unfiltered thoughts, about oceans and bed linen and waves of all kinds, stroking, denoting, the taut damp pink mist, petal thin veined wrists, of two infant sea mammals, at the end of which were her hands. And her hand. If at that moment her hand had been a leaf, it would have been like a leaf that is dried and hangs upside down, drawn up into a loosely knotted fist, fingers curled accidentally to form a shallow cave, the kind that minnows swim right through rather than around when submerged in pond water, as natural as all that and as humbly elegant as the stretched out neckbands of her white cotton tops. As soft as a bunny under there. As cool and repellent as a wax paper cup. And she was always disappearing, just as I was always disappearing; it is our kind that secretly long for someone perfect and not too bothersome to disappear along with. For something perfect and not too bothersome to take care of. It is not a matter of soundness of mind. I am perfectly straight in the head, I just don't get out much, that's the thing. See these veins, these cracks in the ceiling and dinnerware, though dry and hollow, they branch and spread like they are supposed to, as is typical in the growth of roots and flow of blood, and that is a good enough reminder that it is all as alive as I make it. I have the power to take life to give life, to sand and patch, to fill arteries with concrete, to fill lungs with mud, strangulate, resuscitate, to blindfold from seeing, to unscarf to see what I choose to be seen, to move to caress or bring to tears or pull the painful tack from the paw of sweet E. Emily bride chair. Forever in my debt.

She leans a little to one side, anxiously. She has no seat, but brides aren't exactly what's best for sitting. I place her on my shoulders, my head through the hole where the seat once was, her cane back thrusts up from behind my neck, her veil softens my features. Think of us as a couple. We are dependent on one another like a plastic jug and a clump of malnourished wild flowers. It is a combination of two mediocrities which create an exquisite beauty. She is the icicle on my pine branch. She is the gum foil on my concrete walk. She recites stories to me, describes to me vision through net lace. See she wears that veil of hers constantly now, in and out of sleep, through meals and hygiene, and that matchbook-sized shard of porcelain tea cup with the handle still intact (just begging to be hung from something) from a strand of almost identical porcelain beads very close to and tightly around her throat, as respective to the other in color and leaving the same temporary indentations as the edge of a saltine on cold butter. Vision through net lace. It is she says, not unlike looking through a borderless smudge. Unpredictably a wind might blow her shroud up and to one side, an unblurred fragment of the floor appears, a clear portion of my face, a blinding glimpse of an exposed lightbulb. I cannot tell if she smiles or frowns at this dependency on chance, with delight or frustration, and I say Em, if it is predictability you want, if it is order you seek, well I can tell you right now there is no method to a smudge. She whines apathetically or sighs bemused, that is fine, issuing a dainty breath that floats across the breakfast table smelling of almond, and recalls the thrifty wholesomeness which renounces cheap or expensive toiletries and the accompanying composure of cyanide. You would think that through net lace she could not see too clearly, but you would know that through net lace you could not see her too clearly at all.



Emily slender leg, Em sway to one side white moth dancing, pace to back and fro a tango, shedding petals on the floor, veil blowing in the electric fan breeze, lit by a table lamp, no harsh shadows, no harsh shadows. Peripherally the room is a mess. There are bits of white scattered everywhere. How is it when separate pieces are broomed to a pile that waste is transformed into treasure? A simple mound of colorless corolla, open any jewelry box and you will find less regal collections. In the summer when the windows stayed open and the screens were gone, we'd sit watching huge insects fly and dart above the vacant kudzu pasture, thinking for the whole three months that they were dragonflies and wondering why so far from water they carried on like that. We know now that they were cicadas, seventeen-year cicadas, and that there wasn't the swamp we imagined under all those vines. Even after they flew through the windows and died dead on the floor, shed those explosive-looking shells, we assumed they were dragonflies, and you, Em, you collected them, not the least bit disturbed at gathering and fondling the byproduct of a spastic death, and strung them between tiny amber beads into a choker that you said, and I agreed, might have been some Egyptian relic. Oh Emily, propped before an open window basking in the high noon sun, a strand of bugs around her throat as she hums something. Open any music box and find a less enchanting tune, out any window is Egypt at twelve o'clock noon.





# Chris Nelson

Chris Nelson has his finger in all sorts of pies. It sounds like a nasty job, and it is. Ellen and I were in NYC for Thanksgiving '88. Our pals Sue and Rick weren't home, but their roommate, Chris, was. We decided to interview, and it worked out very well indeed. We met in some corner bar, but it was too loud to use the tape player. It being the warmest November in memory according to everyone, it was not cold outside though going on 8pm, and, so, Chris suggested we do it in the park across the street. I thought this would be a good idea because then I could ask him about the riot in the park the previous summer. Before I could turn the recorder on he was already talking about it.

**Chris Nelson:** ...and it was a big police riot.

**Glen:** Were you involved in the riot?

**Chris:** No. Actually we heard helicopters at about 12:30 at our house which is about 3 or 4 blocks catercorner that way and we thought they were probably following an individual criminal like someone had escaped or they'd had a shootout or something. Not that this happens all the time, but it seemed like a likely prospect. So we didn't go running out of the house. It was only the next morning that people told us about it. Many of our friends were involved in it. There were a core of people who knew they were going to try to clear the park and were ready for something, but there are always a lot of people here on a weekend night. Many of them were just caught up in it mostly sympathizing with the demonstrators rather than the police, but many people who had no interest in it at all got clubbed by the police including people I knew. Ever since then the park has been the subject of a lot of commentary, some serious analysis and a lot of hot air blowing back and forth.

**Glen:** Why did they want to close the park?

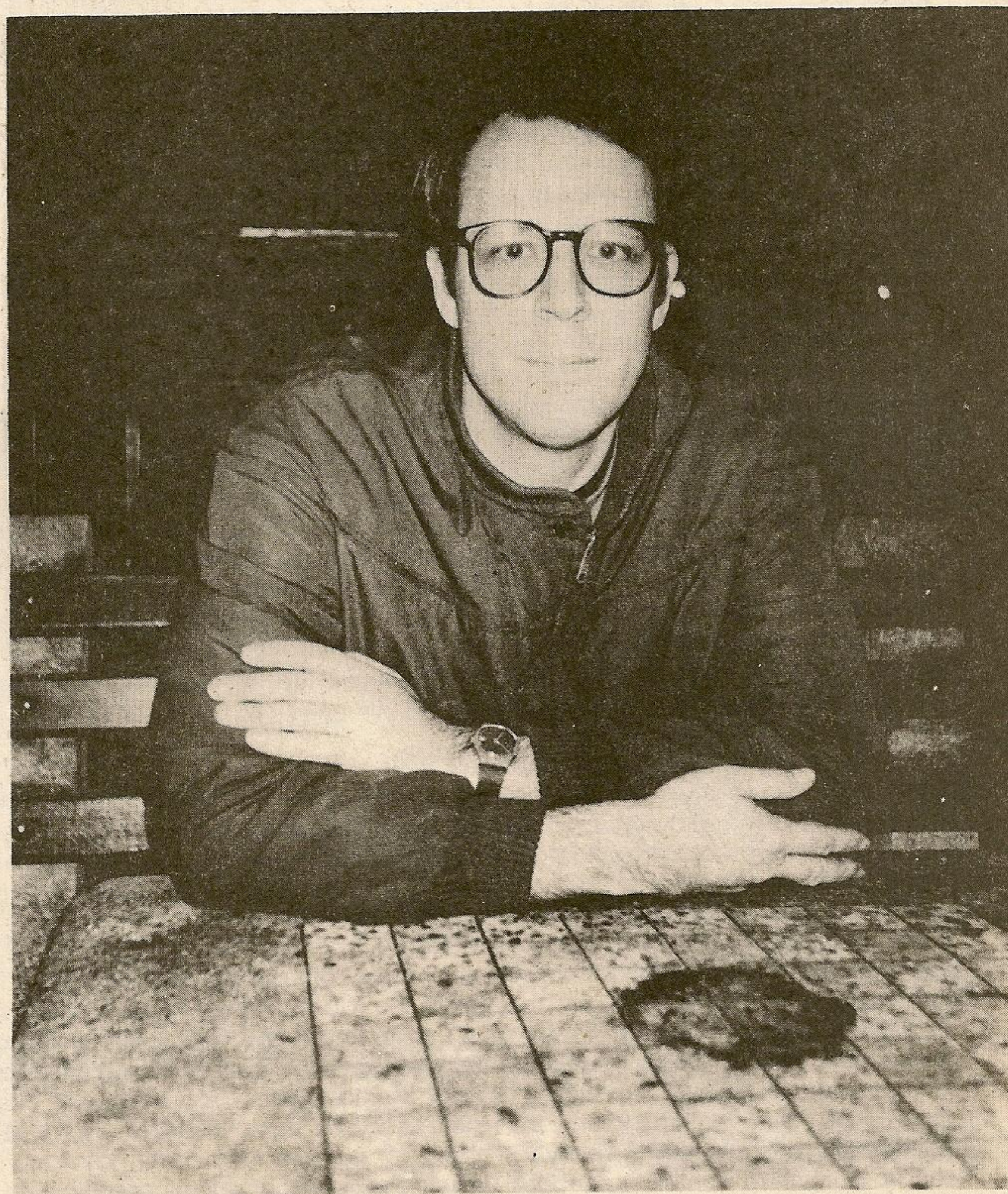
**Chris:** What it is is a night zone, and it features a lot of bars and things. People that live around here particularly there's this building over here called the Christadora which is an expensive co-op building that was an old elegant building a long, long time ago...

**Glen:** The tall one?

**Chris:** Yes.

**Glen:** It sat empty for years...

**Chris:** Yes. And then they refurbished it and now it costs some astronomical amount to live there. The rich people that live there, and that's not the only building around the park that has rich people in it... but people like that began to complain about the noise level in the park. There are homeless people, there are night clubbers walking up and down, and there are activists of various stripes who come in here and have an interest in creating some kind of political format. So those people were seen as a threat to those people who had complained.





The police had tried to clear the park a couple of previous weekends to this riot. The word had built up that they were going to come back. Subsequently there was a police riot sort of like the most famous police riot in this country in Chicago in 1968 where the police just blew it completely, and started clubbing people that came out of restaurants and there was footage of it taken by amateur cameramen. That got on TV, and it blew wide open. They had hundreds of complaints against the police. Very few, about three police, have been dismissed or suspended, but there are still calls for further action. When they found out how entrenched the people here were... as you see there are a lot of people in the park now, and this is actually early. It will be a lot more crowded at 1 o'clock than it is now. There are just a lot of people that spend the night in here. Either they just have nowhere else to go or they're just hanging out. The police realized the people around this park would fight them so they moved their efforts over to Washington Square Park where its mostly tourists, drug dealers and NYU students. So they thought they would have better luck facing them off there.

**Glen:** So you were telling us you are coming out with a new Mofungo record. Is that going to be on SST?

**Chris:** Yes. That'll be on SST. It hasn't been signed, but its been agreed to by us and by them. The basic tracks were recorded on Labor Day and finished within a couple of weeks of that, and I don't know when it's coming out. We are working out the details and the title and everything.

**Glen:** Is it a new direction for Mofungo?

**Chris:** I would say it's not a new direction. It's hard to judge right after doing it, but I would say it's very similar to what we've been doing. We may go in a very different direction with the next one. The one thing that's different (this time) is it was recorded in a different studio. While we had been doing them at B.C. studios in Brooklyn, this was done at Baby Monster not too far away from here on Lower Broadway. The sound, because of that, is a little different. Musically, and the types of material we're doing, it's very consistent.

**Ellen:** Is there a song about the riot in the park?

**Chris:** There was one that was called "Riot In Tomkins Square", but then we realized that we didn't really have anything to say about it. We really weren't that close to it, even though we live just a couple of blocks away. There are a lot of bands who, like, live in the park. We didn't happen to be around that night. Even though it is a real political issue, we thought it was kind of odd to seize upon it. We didn't feel we were as personally involved in it as a lot of other people. The issue is not so crucial to our own lives. I presume other people are writing songs about it.

**Glen:** You do get a lot of your songs from things going on around you.

**Chris:** In Mofungo, we definitely do. Obviously, it is a "political band". That's always mentioned. That was the case before I was in the band, but I was certainly happy with the idea or I wouldn't have joined the band because that's what they were. We have a very easy going attitude about being in a band. We take it with a grain of salt. It's something we do aside from the full time jobs we all have, except Elliott (*Note: Sharp*), whose full time job is being a musician in various contexts. But we take the contents of the songs seriously. We talk about these things all the time anyway. We tend to talk about as much as we play when we practice, and we get in arguments because we don't agree on everything. We'll be discussing some issue and that'll often be what we write about.

**Glen:** You don't tour very much, and I know that's because you all have other jobs and other things to do, but are there plans to tour more now that you're on a bigger label? (*Note: SST*)

**Chris:** My preference would be to tour because I have the fewest other obligations. Robert, for example, has a family. Willie's job is more like a career where he can't come back and find something else, but I would really like to tour. I like to play, and I like to travel around, but I haven't been able to enact my desire to tour.

**Ellen:** You do enjoy having an audience?

**Chris:** Definitely, but we have to be realistic about how much of an audience we'd have. We did do one tour in the midwest, and we had an overall good response. I liked doing it, and I hope to encourage the other fellows to do it more. We never really found a booker here that would handle us. SST, I think, will be better for that than anyone else who we've dealt with before, but we haven't really worked anything out with them thus far.

**Glen:** Lost Records is pretty much your project, is it not?

**Chris:** The band the Scene Is Now started it to put out our first album. We wanted to keep doing it, and we wanted to have other people on the label, but we really weren't sure how that would happen. Then Twin-Tone said they would manufacture and distribute it, and that's what we've done since then. We've had several bands appear on the label. The way it's organized right now, we don't have much hope of keeping the bands. Mofungo, which I'm in, has already gone on to SST, and Fish & Roses is likely signing their next record with Homestead. Because we don't have any money the organization is really just there for people who don't have any other way to put a record out. We're continuing, though we're not sure about our relationship with Twin-Tone, how it will



change or if it will change because they, like many other independent labels, have problems with distributors who've gone bankrupt. So their business situation is not the greatest, but we are planning to continue it one way or another. We may just do it ourselves without going through Twin-Tone.

**Glen:** I hope you can get the records out to those of us who live in the distant cities. Twin-Tone's distribution doesn't always seem so good.

**Chris:** I don't think they know how to get to our audience. They have a different audience for their stuff. A typical band like the Replacements or something like that, they know who to send that to, but our stuff falls a little between the cracks as far as they are concerned, and I don't think they do as good a job as they might in finding our audience, but then, no one else is doing it, so I always mute my complaints about them when I'm doing them publicly. I feel they have helped us while other people haven't, so that's to their credit.

**Glen:** So tell us about Chain Gang and their strange record you put out (Note: *Mondo Manhattan*).

**Chris:** Well, I had a big hand in that record, from the four track recording to the final stage it came out in in the end.

**Glen:** They've been around for a million years, right?

**Chris:** They've been around since... well, I guess it was the mid-70s. Something on that record was from '75 or so. When they started they lived way up town in Inwin Heights and the Bronx. They started out as a cover band, but then they found to get jobs down at Max's and stuff they had to have their own songs. They first came to my attention because of the singles they had. The singles were really good. They don't like the fact that people always harp on the singles now. If you start asking about the singles they kind of go... (makes growling sound) Everyone wants to talk about that and to them that's ten years ago already, and they have this new album. What we should do or someone should do is tape it all and pass it around and everyone would be satisfied they'd heard it. But anyway, "Son Of Sam" was the first one, and they had done this during the Son of Sam case, when the serial killer out in Queens was being sought. We just bought it because of the title and the cover, and we liked it. I was the art director at *New York Rocker* in '78 or so. When I got the job, I was leafing through some photos that had been left behind by the people that had worked there previously, and there was one of Chain Gang. They were standing in front of an Aeroflot poster on the subway. I never found out if they put that up or if that was actually there in the subway. Then their label was Kapitalist (sic.) Records with the onion domes of Red Square worked into the word Kapitalist. So I thought these guys were pretty funny. They had done some stuff with Mike Sappol (now of Krackhouse) at the St. Marks Poetry Project right before I met them. I don't even remember how I met them, but I just got to know them better with time. When the time came around for them wanting to do some recording, Jeff McGovern, who used to be the drummer in the Scene Is Now and was involved at that time with Lost Records, went with his four track over to the

# April May

Tuesday, April 4-8:00pm

**Evan Levy:**

On becoming a Fossil-  
A Slide/Lecture/Musical Presentation

Tuesday, April 11-8:00pm

**Fotograpphiti:**

An Evening with Fotograpphiti-  
Presentation of Work

Thursday, April 20-8:00pm

**Tim Seaton:**

The Animal Speaks-  
A Music and Film Presentation

Thursday, April 27-8:00pm

**Tracy Terrell:**

New Puppetry-  
A Presentation of New Work

Thursday, May 4-8:00pm

**Kevin Haller:**

The Computer as an Aid to the Visual Arts

Tuesday, May 9-8:00pm

**Rob Peace:**

A Video and Music Presentation

Thursday, May 18-8:00pm

**Glen Thrasher, Ellen McGrail, Joe Choo,  
Neil Fried, E.K. Huckaby:**

"Onlooking"-  
Live Performance and Video

Tuesday, May 23-8:00pm and Thursday, May 25-8:00pm

**Felton Eaddy and the Atlanta First World Writers Group:**

A Two Night Series of Readings

**Working Papers Series  
at Small Press Bookshop**

**804 North Highland Ave. NE  
Atlanta, Ga**



basement where they also had a club called Zombie. It was a pretty neat social club where bands played sometimes. He recorded the basic tracks. They aren't very... how should I say it? ...persistent in getting things done. They're sort of wild. What they would do was do a lot of overdubs, without focusing on what they needed to finish it. They would just say we'll try this; we'll try this... and spending more money than they had. So I sort of corralled them and said tell me what you want. I would bring them into the studio and say you've got a limit you can only do so many overdubs. Ricky had a rough cut of that edit with the different little "sound bytes", as I guess you have to call them nowadays, in between the songs, on cassette. It was a lot looser with a lot of dead space, and I tightened that up. In the end I thought it came out pretty good. A lot of the reviews said nonexistent production, but we did a lot of work to get it to that point. Currently, they're working on some new stuff and are eager to record, but I don't know where the money is going to come from.

**Glen:** Who are these guys? They don't seem like your typical New York artist types.

**Chris:** No. They're not. They are New Yorkers. They're very very New York. They're native New Yorkers, and they're extremely regional in their outlook, their accent, which is one of the things I like about them. Native New Yorkers, I always get along with very well. I don't know how to describe it. They are just not in sync with the rock scene. They could be, I think, if they wanted to, but their interests are elsewhere. Ricky (*Luanda*), the singer, he's the one I see the most often. The other guys are really nice guys, but they turn up so very very rarely. We actually doubted if they existed as a band right before the album came out because we hadn't seen one or two of them in about two years. Then all of a sudden they did this gig that has been written about somewhere, when Thurston was putting together this night at CBGBs, and he talked them into it. At the last minute they were going to rehearse and instead they went down to CBGBs and played. They hadn't played in ten years. (*Note: slight exaggeration*) It wasn't until they did that that I was sure they still had the band.

**Glen:** What about the Scene Is Now? Are you playing out any now?

**Chris:** We actually aren't at all right now. We had the original lineup for quite a while, right up through the middle of this current album I just gave you (*Note: Tonight We Ride*). Then, Jeff the drummer quit, and then we got Tony Malmone to work with us a little when Phil (*Dray*), who had been the prior bassist decided he just wanted to play keyboards. Will (*Rigby*) decided to record with us, and he helped us finish that album. Since then we've played with a couple of different lineups. In Minneapolis we played with these friends of ours as a rhythm section. Here we played with Tony and Will once. Once we played with Sue Garner, of Fish and Roses, and Doug Wygal, who is in a number of bands, as the drummer. Dick (*Champ*) who was the second guitarist went out to Seattle, although he is planning to return, but he is going to graduate school in classic languages, Greek and Latin. Right now we are just working and recording. We have another album that's nearly finished already. We plan to continue and see if there is a demand for us to play out. Around here you have to really work to get the gigs, and there is so much competition for them. Again, I really like to play out. I'd be willing to go through that. But Phil, who is the other core person remaining, wanted to devote more of the group's energies to recording and maybe playing again when the situation is perhaps not as unrewarding as it is now.

**Glen:** Do you have any more bands upcoming on the Lost label?

**Chris:** We are looking at some other bands for Lost, but nothing I can really say without jumping the gun because they haven't committed. We definitely will continue. If we have trouble getting more albums out we might do somethings on tapes. We actually reorganized Lost Records. It had been the Scene Is Now, but recently, Phil and I added to Lost: Rick Brown, Robert Sietsema and Cinnie Cole, who is also a musician. She is currently not in a band. When she joined the label, she was in Zozobra, but they have subsequently broken up.

**Glen:** We have a record she is on.

**Ellen:** With Davey & LaDonna (*Locales For Ecstasy*).

**Chris:** Yes. That may be the only record she is on as a member of the group, but she performs around New York a lot as an improviser, in various combinations. She is a longtime friend of ours. I think maybe her first band was this band called Sunset Chorus with Suzie Timons, a member of the original the Scene Is Now and Ikue Mori. That was a very good band, but Susie has since dropped out of the music world.

**Glen:** Do you ever consider putting out more Improvisational stuff?

**Chris:** I think we will. There is always that edge. All of the Lost artists have some association with that scene. That is one direction we would consider pursuing. Of course there are many labels that feature that type of music, certainly more in Europe than here. But there are outlets for that type of music. It is up to all of us what we're going to have. The stuff we are looking at now is similar to what we have so far, sort of between genres of music.

**Glen:** What's your favorite unknown NYC band, right now?

(*Chris hesitates, starts, hesitates...*)

**Glen:** It doesn't have to be completely unknown.



**Chris:** I'll just say some things I like. Again they tend to be my friends because they are the ones I see. Sue Garner has this other thing besides Fish & Roses called the Biggest Square Thing in the World with Ruth Peysor. I like them. Phil (Dray) who is also in the Scene Is Now has a sort of country/pop sounding band with Angel Dean and Lee Ann Smith called Shackwacky. I like them a lot. I see a lot of improvised things, and it's a whole crowd of people that combine and recombine which I frequently enjoy. Krackhouse are not really unknown, but they are not widely loved, but I do like them.

**Glen:** So you've said several times in this interview that you would like to be in a band that played out and toured more. You need to form another band.

**Chris:** I'm planning to do something like that. I want to get a solo show together. I'm planning to buy a little car with a hatch back, and I look at that little area and say "the amp will go there." Most of the people I play with, being as I am, in their mid-thirties, have other obligations, unless they are already in touring bands. It's hard to get them to commit themselves to touring. I don't want to conflict too much with the bands I'm already in, because I like them, but I'd like to either have another band or go on my own because I really do enjoy touring and playing. The opportunities to play here are limited. Improvisors have a lot more opportunity than rock bands. I'm only an improviser in part. Even commercial sounding bands have to work very hard to get their gigs in New York.

**Glen:** In one band you play drums and in another guitar. Do you have musical training in either?

**Chris:** I have no musical training. All my training consists of being in bands, starting with garage style rock when I was a teen in Minneapolis. Then when I was here in the mid to late 70s in film school at NYU, I was in art noise bands which is sort of the same thing as a garage band, the New York equivalent of one anyway. Everything I know is from that. I play several instruments. I also play the trombone a lot, and I really don't have any knowledge of what I'm doing. I just put my lips together and blow. On the Scene Is Now records I play trombone, and I'm frequently invited to join people on trombone, more as novelty than anything else, although I am often complemented for my efforts. I don't know what I'm doing, and that doesn't seem to disturb anybody.

**Glen:** It seems like a difficult instrument to play.

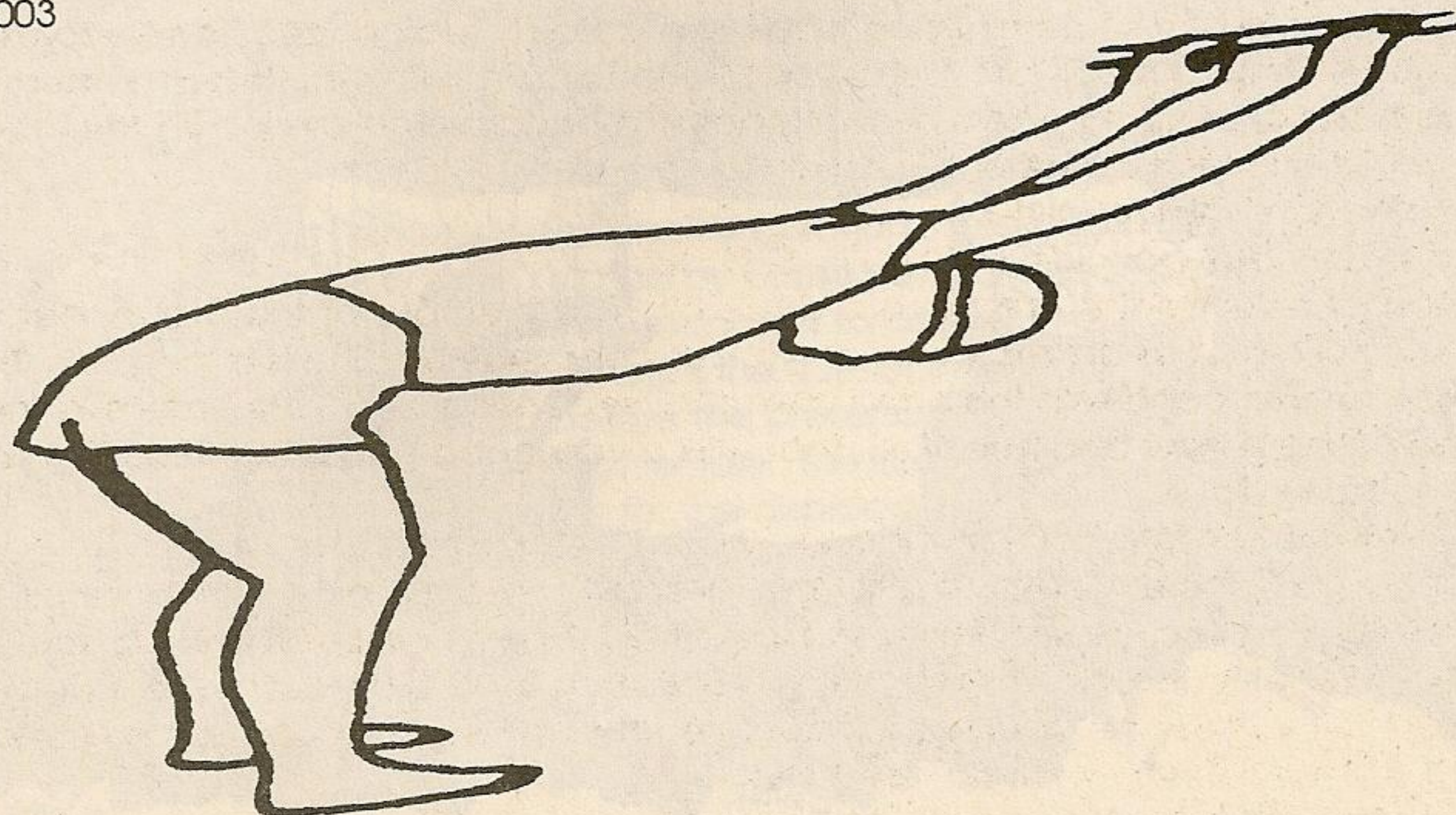
**Chris:** All you've got to do is have big lips and big lungs.

**Ellen:** So you do improv on trombone.

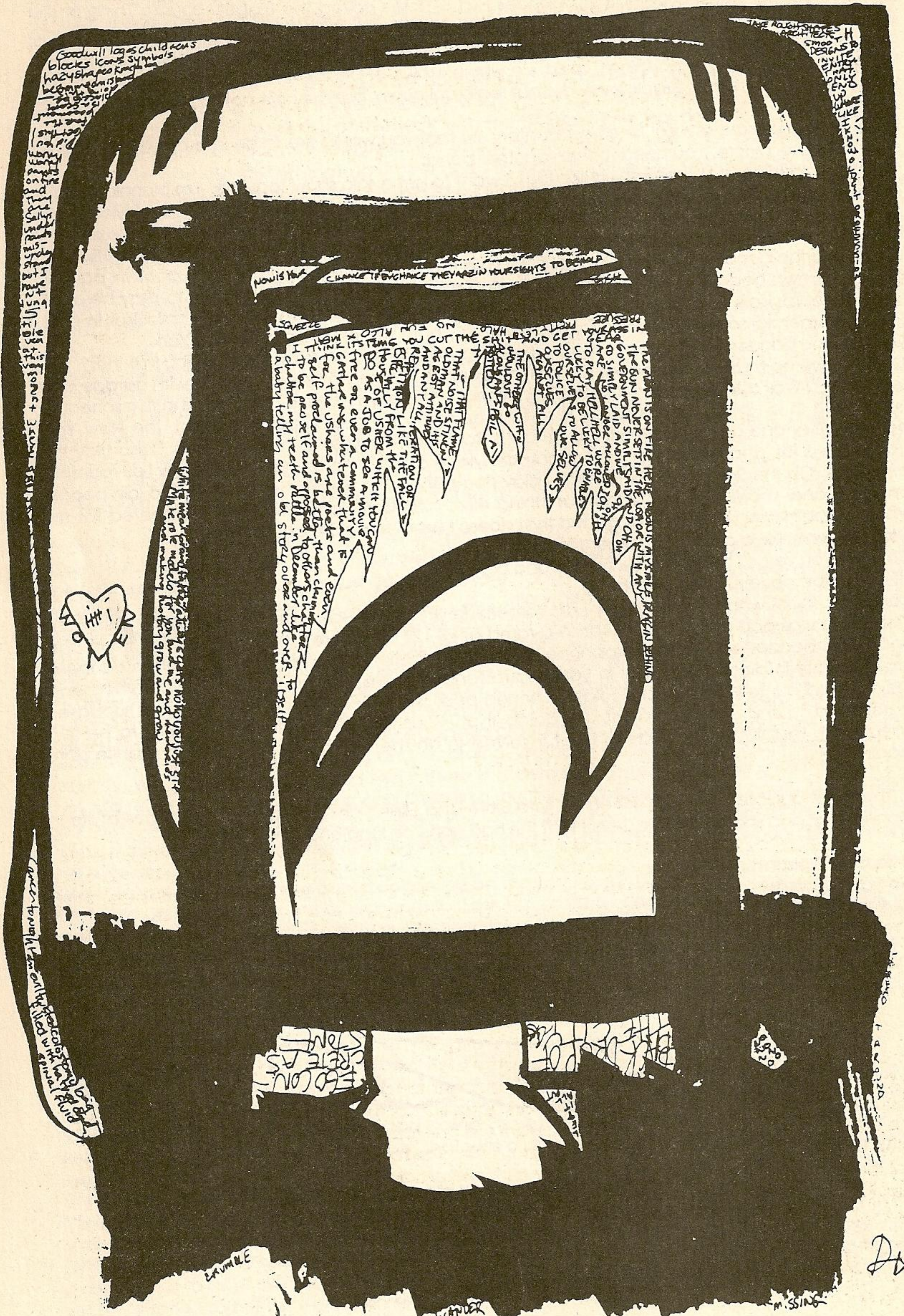
**Chris:** Yes. That's what I do. Recently I did something with Evan Gallagher, a keyboardist. He had a piece that was part of the Avant-Garde-a-rama at PS 122 over here where I played the trombone and Doug Henderson played saxophone. Evan's contribution to his piece was he directed these other people in dipping our feet in various substances as we played. We were blindfolded and they dipped our feet in, like, chocolate, canned peas, syrup, ice, coffee, and we were supposed to respond to this. I had a lot of fun doing that. Your trombone skills didn't have to be too advanced. That's the sort of thing I get involved in on the trombone that doesn't require sight reading.

At this point our conversation drifted off into Chris and Ellen's childhood remembrances of life in Minneapolis, and shortly we all agreed that this had gone on long enough for now.

Write Chris Nelson  
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the moon is my smile draggin' behind



# Five Fictions

BY ALAN SONDEIM

## Christian

Christianity is a narratology; Hegelianism is a Christianity; Freudianism is a Christianity. Condensation results in the submission of the Other, the collapse of the repressed into the abjected interiority of the body which is no longer taken for granted as a thing among others in the world. The body is displaced from itself, becoming an Other, without which it could not exist. The same old story occurs over and over again. The reflexivity of the body which appears in Hegel is given its roots in the self-referential body of Christ. The story collapses at the margins of its construction, margins which, if not dependent upon a certain historicity, nevertheless must subscribe to a dubious ontology. An ontology at best. The worst of the ontology.

There is no escape by inversion; what is labor but not spirit all over again, naively promising another teleology at the end of the Marxian rainbow? No operation alters the ontology, which is constant, producing the birth-death theatrical appearance, from Romanesque portals to psychoanalysis. Wittgenstein, certainly, through an accumulative effect, broke through--that is, broke through something. Allow the same for Derrida's Wandering Judaic movement to the margins, which circumscription is hollowed out from within. There is no within.

There is no within, within the interiority of the body. You cannot understand the delight of the abjected body, urine streaming across the face, grovelling in mire, eating the shit of the beloved. This is not the escape from substance; the Christian is afraid of substance, that substance is all there is--that substance reduces the equation, permanently, and one will no longer be heard. A problem for sociobiologists, not very different on that level. The attack on substance runs through Coleridge, for example, with his "Holy! Holy! Holy!" responding in Aids to Reflection to Descartes' materialism. The words eradicate the thing. The thing does not fall apart in its interior. The thing - intolerably - delights in its interior. Nothing can be done with the thing. It is unaccountable, it refuses accounting. Nothing can be done with this refusal.

Nothing can be done with this refusal, except to keep it wandering.

The decay is vile. Form corrodes, therefore corrupts. Everything reduces to the same old story of the godman, mangod; it gets tired with the telling. Reduces to the ligatures of the cross. Gets tired with the telling. On the level of vulgar Christianity, if such a distinction can be made, one runs into poverty on every word of god, and, in fundamentalism, how god speaks to me, therefore--how may I use it? One claims to "accept Christ," "take Jesus into your heart" but it is a trace that is presented, nothing more. Vestments. The hollowness is given a name and everything works with the placebo in place. Just the name. Beginning with the word--read no farther. Just the name.

Meaningless, but the name has power, strangulation. I am eaten alive with it, eaten alive by Christians. Devoured by Christians. Curtailed by Christians. Parents and children killed in the name of a Church Militant that systematically manages to corrupt in every language. Destroyer of cultures! The slaughter of the innocent! The irony is the truth of this, the truth of all of this. Nothing but the dubious word of someone speaking before the presence of television, electronics of all sorts, even the *motorcar*. God help us, belief is that terrible. The irony is the truth of all of this--the slaughter, not the godman (which is simply the signifier for the displacement from substance), Spirit, Absolute, absolute death. The name is given to the father to kill in the name of the name. Names never survive. Not even, not at all, really.





nude, aroused, the dissolution (dissolving) of the genitals:  
not in the sense of an absence--but a vortex, incandescent point.

the apocalypse of the revelation of the body, the body's exposure.

something playing itself out within the scene of the family.  
a presentation under the control of the elimination of all secrets.

what is furtive is read now as the book nature. what establishes  
itself is the sexuality against that of the mother-father. an invitation to join in, transgress and invert all  
ties of sentimentality.

is one required to go, resalvage the iron industry with its beak, required then from its making?



Masturbating, I lie on my back, naked, my legs spread wide apart, anal muscles relaxed, the hole inviting, muscles taut with the strain of the position, ass high in the air. Everything is visible to you, the rim of the penis, the stretched veins, the skin between the balls and thighs, the interior of the asshole with its wrinkled contractions and expansions. Wider, I continue to open until I feel the split within me, your gaze itself contracting upon the surfaces of the body. I beg you to watch, beg you to violate me with your eyes, only your erect nipples visible on your large breasts--you're clothed, the rest of you, commanding my attention, my full attention. This is the repetition of the illegitimate pose, the childhood scene. I perform for you, can give you nothing else; this is the presence of any secret, white lie, turning away from the truth, skeleton in the closet, this display for you, for an unseen audience, I fantasize the audience.

My penis wets itself along the tip, a drop descends the dome from the opening which is the whole of the world. For an instant my hands descend to the cheeks of my ass, I spread them farther, several inches of the interior are visible now, throughout the realm of sensation and forgiveness. I beg you to do anything with me, you intensify the pain, split me farther with your language and the presence of others watching with increasing passion. I am ambivalent about this writing, this speaking, close to an abandonment, you seize the attention of my hand, squeeze my balls into a continuation, past the point of return to the letters in my head. My thighs are tense with blood, effusion, my penis erect, rubbed by hands almost delirious in their motion. You place a finger, then two, in my ass, deep past the first and second knuckles, and I begin to shake. You place a finger, then two, in my mouth and I suck the sour taste, watching your nipples become more and more erect as your breathing matches my own in the arena.

You unbutton your pants, remove them, the odor of your cunt filling the space between the two of us. You tower over me, command me, I place my hands beneath my ass as a stream of urine falls, covers my chest, penis, drips between my balls, flows into my hair, and last, my eyes and eager mouth gasping for breath and liquidity. You command me, I spread the liquid across my body; suck, you command, thrusting your asshole against my mouth, and I suck the remnants of shit from you, hold you open with both hands as I develop my language, searching for synonyms to this and every other activity. I am shaking violently now, my penis is painful, throbbing to the point of exhaustion, as you smear your menstrual blood across my chest, red against the yellow urine, a body sinking into the half-light of slime and the dissolution of substance. You retreat, command me, thrust two fingers into my ass, command me, two of mine penetrate the same; you command me to push out, as shit floods their shafts, later to caress the flat planes of my body, a brown-orange in the beginnings and endings of language.

Whimpering, I can no longer mouth words or the visible world, my hands lovingly spread the body across itself, liquid upon liquid, substance within substance, the intensification of every sense as cries work themselves against the shaft of the penis, which suddenly erupts, you command me, cum spreads itself, drips against the drift of flesh everywhere at once, you command me, I search language, eyes flash the visible world, ears hold sound at bay, I dissolve back into the floor, my naked body outlined in its own productions, gesture drying in the perfumed air.





### Sparks Take It Down

The Fire slows, and shows its ashy Face;  
Embers cry, Embers! Sparks illuminate  
Their Throes of Death, as if to satiate  
The Dusk that darkens as it runs its Race.

Time draws its End; I hesitate,  
Frozen, within the Fire's Place. Thus Fate  
Collapse beneath the Embers' Trace.  
Sparks Take It Down, Roof Beams that

once embraced

The Smoke-hewn Sky; Sparks escalate  
The Screams of Broken Flesh in Haste  
Collapsed against the burning Walls. Too late  
The wooden Throat ignites, is Placed  
Upon a Wooden Neck and Wooden Thighs  
That Wood Erects, and Burns them to the Skies.



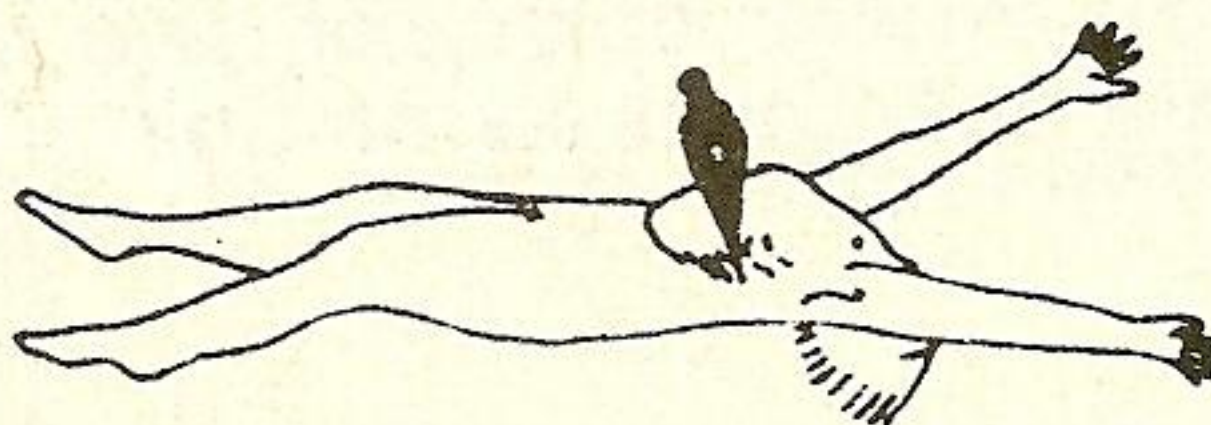
### The Line Hoids Business Well for Other Things

The Shears that cut God's Hair shall not cut Mine  
To grow again In Canyons, trees and forests - all  
Fair of Line and Mien; I am a Shepherd,  
Less repute than these that Stood at Mountain's  
Base. The air was clear, the wind raw.  
A Trace averted was the Word they saw  
Played large upon the Face of God with Hair  
Shorn short. Their hurt was not as Wide  
As Sorrow, then they Died.

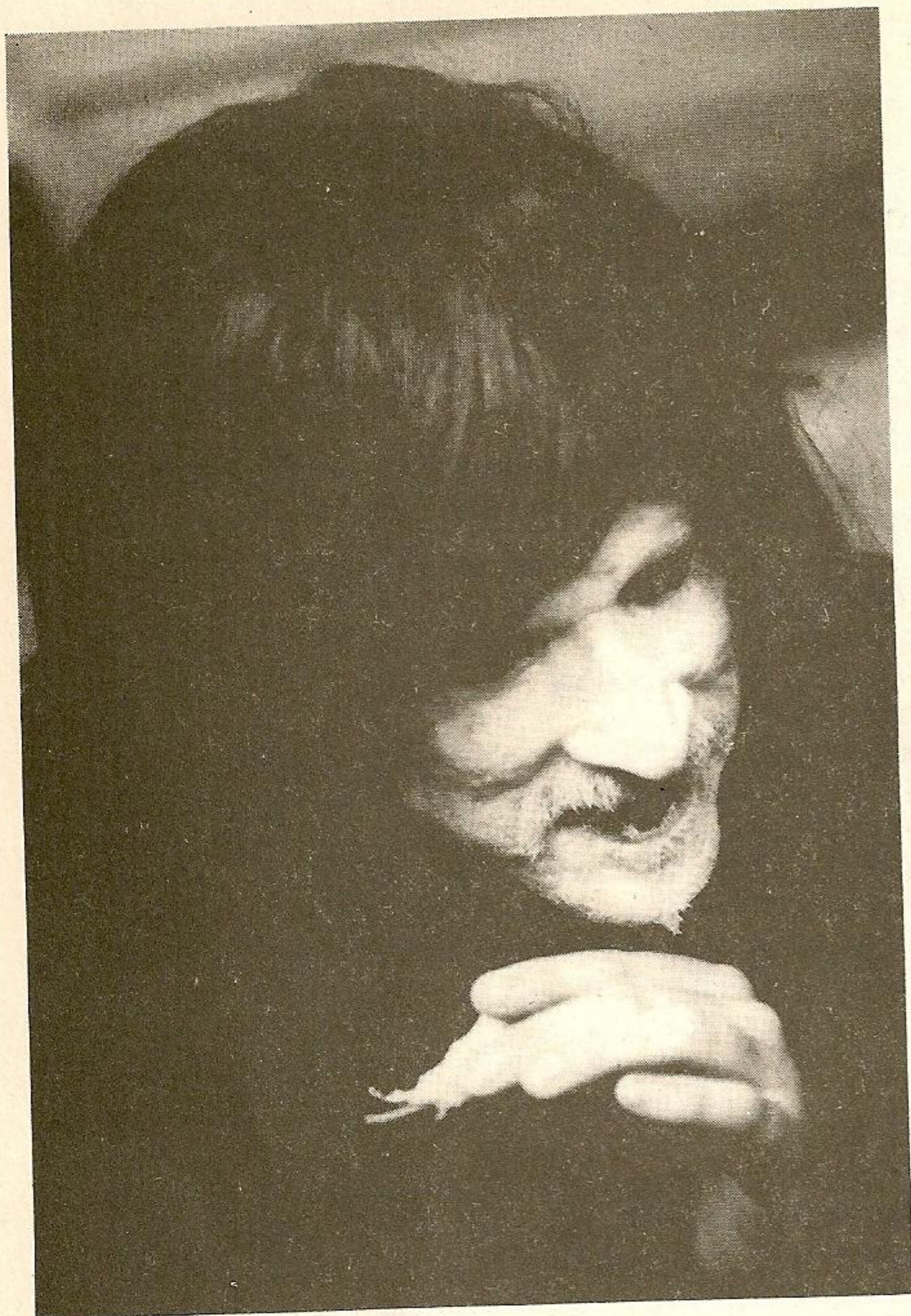
I think that I had heard the Mad Machine  
so different when it ran  
Creature called what could have been  
a Cycle ~~run~~ from Man  
formed?

A Theory:

The Sphere doth equally withdraw from any Point upon its Surface.







"the groovy immortalist"

**Miekal**  
A n d /

**Liz Was**  
interviewed

Miekal And and Liz Was are two of the most constant members of the 80s (soon 90s) cassette/mail underground network. As the following interview will attest they perceive the value of the underground to be a lot more far reaching than Frank Kogan's lonely hearts club analogy allows. Since 1981 the two have worked together in diverse art modes: publishing, performance, computer art, music (noise), and almost anything you can think of. Their semi-yearly Festival of the Swamps is quickly becoming one of the key events of the network calendar. The details of the rest are spelled out better than I am capable of doing in the mail interview below.



**Glen:** Explain where the name "Qwa Digs" etc. and its various mutations comes from. Or don't:

**Miekal:** I guess we shouldn't be surprised that every interview we do begins with this question. We have chosen to keep changing our name in order to suggest our participation in an endless permutational process. When the name changes first began the changes from one to another were subtle... the last few years the name has been making quantum leaps. I think several interesting responses have arisen. First, our contacts are constantly making up variations of our name (often far more bizarre than we could ever think of). Secondly, it's a marked way of creating an elusive and unpredictable image which defies exploitation and consumption. Our name and imaging changes before it can be appropriated. Finally, it has created an intriguing puzzle for those few folks who collect our work.

Our name has just been changed to Floating Concrete Octopus. Formerly we were called: Semantics Could Vanish, Aquatics Ever Tarnish, Qwa Digs Never Parish, Qwa Digs Under Paris's, Twa Digs Under Paris, Twa Dogs in Paris, & began with Two Dogs in Paris. The original name came from a painting of mine which my yoga teacher at the time named.

**Glen:** Are your musical, publishing and other artistic activities a reflection of or an extension of an anarchist or social nihilist perspective? Explain yourselves or am I making things up?

**Miekal:** Actually the word that we have been using for a couple years is anartistic, to refer specifically to a notion of cultural anarchy which is improvised ritual and intuitive responses to acquired cultural taste. I think the most radical thought/material contemporary to our planet is noise. And by noise I mean all kinds of noise; architectural noise, paint noise, sculptural noise, behavioral noise, idea noise, graffiti noise, language noise, xerox noise, psychic noise, computer noise... Our experiment is to invent tactics and strategies which are operable in a world of all possible noises. The year 2000 is only minutes away and our modes of thinking are entrenched in western industrial rationalism. Our form of anarchy is reconstructive. It takes all the possible noises and words and mixes them into the widest imaginable vocabulary from which we choose our actions and ideas.

**Elizabeth:** I'm wary of using terms which might identify us with political activity, because politics, as most people understand it, is not the realm we work in. Although I think our work is highly political (and yes, anarchist) in the wider sense of that term, we nonetheless tell people we're apolitical because then they won't have to wonder if it's Nicaragua, Green Peace, the Homeless, or Anti-Apartheid we're concerned with. A lot of people who call themselves political, especially here in "p.c." Madison, have tunnel vision about the ways to change humankind; they can only see the very current state of the world & the particular issues that, for good reason, are of popular concern among liberals and anarchists. They don't think about the cultural evolution of humankind, about how important it might be to change the way people see, hear, and move; in fact many political activists here in Madison still listen to Motown, blues, reggae, and rockabilly, are very uncomfortable about the way Miekal and I dance, are just plain culturally conservative! I suggest they challenge not just the economy, labor, and the war machine but the way they spend their leisure time, how they process information, what stimulates their brain and why.

I don't ignore the fact that people are starving, dying, miserable, all over the world and sometimes I feel bad that I'm not taking direct action to help these people, but I have always found myself looking at things from a very different perspective. I've always liked Spinoza's term "sub species aeternitatis": when you look at thing from "under the aspect of eternity" (the "big picture" if you will), you see that generally humans have always had wars over love, money and land, some have always starved while others ate the fat, the environment has been abused (adapted) from the beginning, there have always been dumb masses following a few leaders. And also every society has had an intelligentsia of some sort, shamans, and a scattered number of unaffiliated eccentrics (like Socrates). It is these people, their concerns (ideas, spirit, language, the future), and their methods (ritual, communication) with which we identify ourselves more than with the modern-day anarchist.

**Glen:** Give us some background. How long have Miekal and Liz been working together as musicians? Artists? Publishers? Husband and Wife? etc.?

**Miekal:** Liz picked me up in a neighborhood bar a block from where we live in Feb 1981...

**Elizabeth:** No, we picked each other up.

**Miekal:** She came to the house that night to hear me read her my book of poetry *Steady-Hiker Reverie*.

**Elizabeth:** No, we went to his house to smoke his roommate's last cigarette, but Miekal started talking about himself and his work a mile a minute, placing painting after poem in front of me, not giving me a chance to take any of it in slowly. (This is the way we treat visitors to our house now!)



**Miekal:** She moved in the next day. I think that all our forms of collaboration began within a couple of months. I had never really played music though I was informed about 20th century music and had written a bunch of new notation pieces which of course I had no idea of what they would sound like. Liz had played piano, sax and guitar for years but had never really improvised or played free.

**Elizabeth:** At that point I actually thought John Cale and John Cage were the same person! I thought I wanted to be a jazz musician, but I could never decide which instrument to specialize in. (I'm still an instrumental schizophrenic, but happily so: I no longer feel the need to choose.) The night we met was the day before my debut at the Second Annual Madison Women's Jazz Festival. What timing, that was the beginning and the end of my life as a jazz musician, thank god, or rather, thank Miekal. Not that I have anything against jazz musicians, I just know there's so much more to me than my ability to swing and meeting Miekal was the start to learning this. That first night at his house he painted a picture of me titled "Nascent & Able". I think this is still apropos.

**Miekal:** I started playing her saxophone almost immediately and in fact, we did a music concert at a hippy coffeehouse after I had been playing for only a couple of months. What a noise! That was the first time I ran into the street playing a horn, something which I've done a number of times since. All through that time I remember insisting that she play nothing recognizable when we played together. After eight years of improvising together we don't even know how to describe the sound we make. (Maybe "sound from a wall of water" would be close.)

**Elizabeth:** There was a lot of struggle back then, mostly from me, because I still believed in the schooled approach. At first I was downright angry at Miekal that he didn't care about being in tune, reading notes, learning theory etc. The tides have changed so many times since then, even ending in certain 180° turns, for example Miekal gets mad at me now for not "keeping time" in a more traditional sense when I play drums. But I have so long ago now left behind an interest (other than technical) in playing traditionally.

During our first weeks together we threw the I Ching to ask about the relationship between our relationship and music, and came up with "Heng", which combines Thunder and Wind. Not surprisingly, the instrument families we have respectively become most attached to are (Miekal) wind instruments and (myself) percussion. Music is still probably the area in which we most easily communicate and understand each other, and this is true even when we go for weeks not playing together. (As in the past year since our son was born, who we usually take turns hanging out with while the other goes down to "the music room". We look forward to the time (soon) when Liaison's attention span, interest and ability will enable him to jam with us. Right now he's more interested in pulling drumsticks out of their holder and putting them back in again, although he does sing and dance a lot, and is an enthusiastic and creative sound poet.)

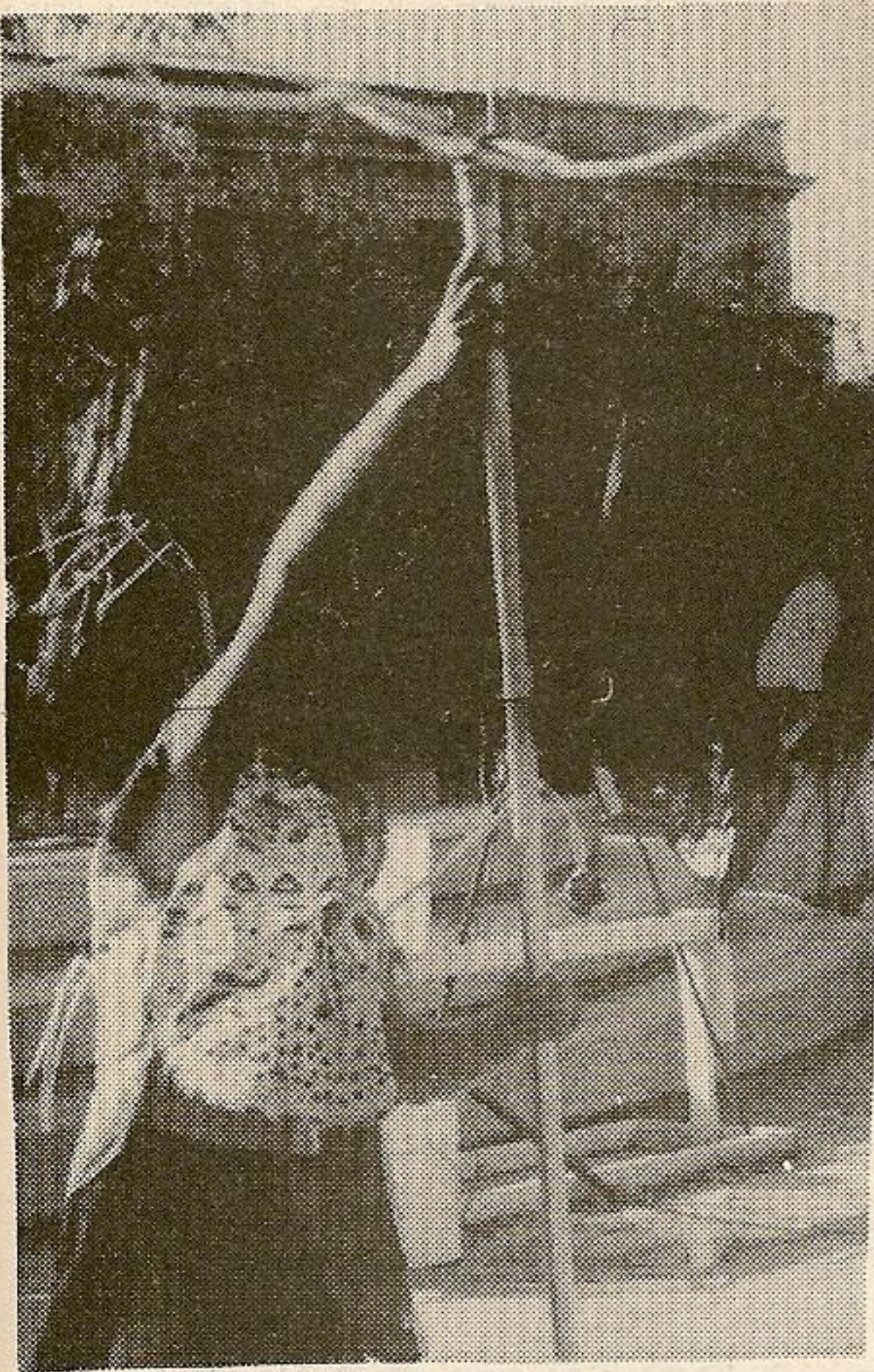
**Miekal:** Publishing is another story. I had been running a press **sun rise fall down artpress** since 1977, publishing limited editions of surreal poetry and essays. In those days about all that I did was read books, write, and publish. By the time I met Liz I was entirely interested in art that was on the very edge of acceptability. We formed Xerox Sutra Editions to publish one-of-a-kind xerox books, some improvised on the copymachine, and eventually to publish works by authors who could not find publishers. At that point in time the experimental publishing underground was very fractured and seemingly burned out from the seventies. In the next couple years we came in contact with literally hundreds of mags which were just starting up. The advent of cheap xerox became the mimeo of the 80s. One of the main reasons we created the press was to make available many of our own works which we knew we would be best qualified to print and make available. It was silly to expect others to print work that required so much editorial manipulation. But at the same time we began publishing visual/verbal and experimental writing by others around the country. Each book we publish tends to represent a unique tendency or gesture in printed experimentation. In 1986 we changed our name to Xexoxial Endarchy (to become non-profit and such our name could not be a copyright infraction so we invented the word Xexoxial (ze zok zial) to suggest the age of infinite reproduction...

**Elizabeth:** and also to suggest neology and polyartistry...

**Miekal:** We have since branched into objects, cassettes, a few videos and 3 1/2" computer disks.

**Elizabeth:** We've lived together as if married from the start—sharing money, food, everything together. In April of '86 we were legally married as a performance piece and we still live together in the same manner. I used to be very anti-monogamy, NEVER thought I'd be married or even live with one man, let alone do everything together, and yet this has shown itself to be the natural route for us, as if predestined. Our work in art and our marriage are one and the same. There is no way





Liz 9-6-87

what we're doing could be accomplished by one person. We work together as a perfectly complemented team (not that we don't bicker and disagree). We are very opposite in many ways, but I think this is why we can live and work in extremes. The old "tension between opposites" is second nature to us, as for all couples who are committed to "working it out", we struggle and learn and evolve positive ways to manifest this natural tension.

**Glen:** What do you have to say about the concept of the nuclear family as a revolutionary concept? Is three a crowd? What do you have to say about parenthood?

**Elizabeth:** Three isn't a crowd any more than a triangle disrupts an angle. On the contrary, the monogamous couple is solidified and motivated. Even before he was born, our child began living up to his name. Liaison is a link between Miekal and I, and between us and the rest of the world, even between us and our parents. Before we had him, we ignored a large part of the world around us—kids, parenting, certain basic aspects of survival. (In fact, now that we have a kid and a computer, we can shoot the shit with just about anyone in the street!) Parenthood has come to me as naturally as eating, sleeping and doing art, and I enjoy it as much. I used to think it was a cop-out for some couples to have kids, a last resort for "making the relationship work". Well, it really is a grounding and a bringing together for two people to make a baby, but it is so much more than that. For us Zon is our new best friend and collaborator, and a concrete reason to make art. We have always made art for the future anyway, picturing some person finding or reading about our work a hundred years from now, but children are the future in a very real way.

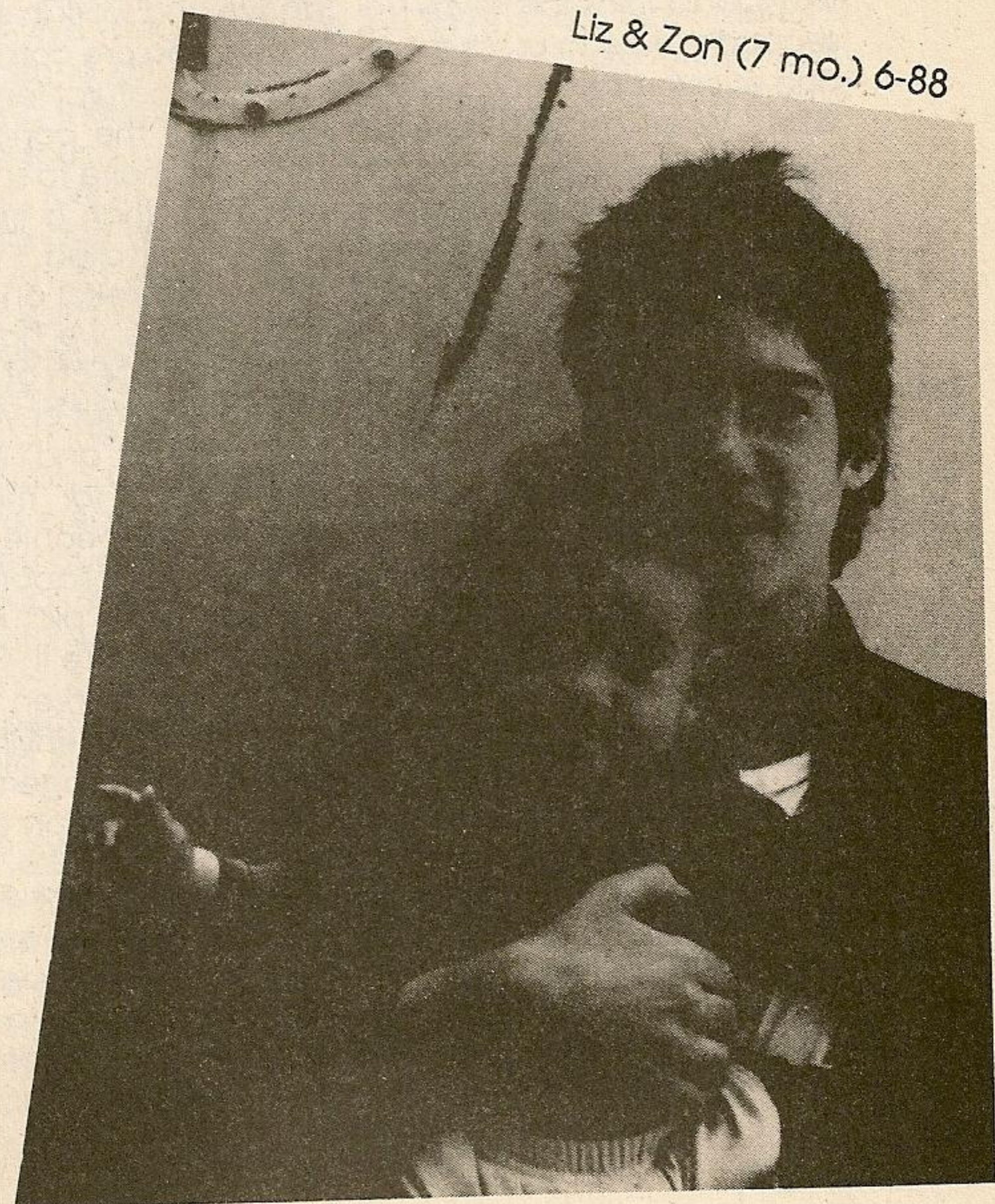
**Miekal:** It's interesting to me that of all the children we meet, how few of them actually have two parents under the same roof. I was raised in an environment where I had to do things in the privacy of my room, with little or no support or encouragement from my parents. Becoming a parent has tied up all these unresolved gaps in my past, simply by creating a future which I have direct control of. I've wanted to have a child my whole adult life, but was always terrified by the threat of losing touch with my art. Now I realize it has actually put me a lot closer to the guts and brains of the art I want to help materialize. I think anything that creates a dramatic change in your life is revolutionary, and bringing a child into the 21st century has to be one of the most considered actions anyone can make.



**Glen:** What role does your home play in the activities surrounding the Festival of the Swamps? What other activities, productions, and/or otherwise emerge from your own home? Have you been getting complaints, arrest warrants, or hassles from neighbors, police, city officials, etc.? Are you famous local weirdos?

**Elizabeth:** Our home is our art studio, music studio, Xexoxial Endarchy office and headquarters, printing and bookmaking facility (except that our rented photocopier is about to be reclaimed for negligent bills), gallery/archival space, swamp headquarters, front yard installation space, (temporary) crash pad for transient anartists, and center for whatever else goes on among Miekal and I and Zon and our shifting set of housemates. We refer to the whole works as the Avant-Garde Museum of Temporary Art, a purposely pompous title which renders it artificial credibility from outsiders who might otherwise think we're just a bunch of weirdos. The title AGMTA originally referred just to the front yard display, which, until the Festival of the Swamps, was our most visible face in Madison and the main source of people's assumption that some weirdos live in that house. 7 years ago we received a warning citation that we had broken six zoning codes by the front yard art: we found easy loopholes in these codes (example: we called our work "recreational equipment" since this is allowed in yards), basically ignored the warning and the city never followed up on it. We don't foresee any further hassles from the city this many years later, since by now we are an institution, or at least a landmark, and such entails a special protective clause in the zoning codes. Generally the neighborhood really likes our yard and gives us positive if intermittent feedback. We periodically test our legal and neighborly limits, last year with our "Church of Anarchy" installation, including regular Sunday "sermon-rituals", and this coming year we will see how high we can build a wooden Tower of Qwabel before the zoning codes catch up with us again. This is a colorful and eclectic section of our otherwise mostly homogenous university-town, the closest Madison comes to feeling urban, and it's clear I think even to those whose tastes are offended by our work, that our yard fits in just right with the rest of "crazy Willy St."

We have endless stories about visitors (example: a Spanish woman who quite seriously came to church here, sat through a whole sermon-ritual and graciously thanked us), objects and artwork anonymously and unanonymously donated to our yard (example: 17 healthy potted white easter lilies that appeared in the middle of the night), weird occasions of vandalism (example: a tripping skinhead who thrust his angry body into the >-shaped wooden building that housed the 1984





Outdoor Ritual & Icon Mail Art Show). Ironically we find that 90% of the visitors here, —the people actually brave enough to walk up to the porch and knock on the door, not just the numbers that stop on the sidewalk in summertime—are from out-of-town.

Even after 8 years of living and performing here, we are more widely known and respected outside of Madison. The local paper blatantly ignored us until 1985, and then only brief mention of us was made until a feature on us and L.B. Clark, a performance-artist in residence at UW. Most recently, we found out about a huge project the Madison Civic Center and Arts Center are jointly sponsoring called "Interactivity", a conference about intermedia with workshops and performances, which is already planned and scheduled for April '89. We were never contacted about this, invited to attend or be involved in any way. Instead the corporate art approach of flying in people from out of town, or hiring only university-related artists. We love it here, Madison has an easy and open atmosphere that we can get a lot accomplished in, it's a perfect cross between a city and a small town, the "country" is readily driveable, but jeezus, our chubby Republican governor is trying to merge the arts board with the tourism division, and Wisconsin is already down to 48th on the list of states' funding for the arts. But all of America is Bushland now, a better reason we'd move somewhere else would be to grow gourds or succulents year round. (Recently we're gourd-crazy, growing and drying them with plans for masks and instruments galore.)

In 1988 about 30 contacts from the global underground network, including some of our Madison friends' contacts from various anarchist gatherings travelled here to be involved in the Festival of the Swamps. Our house was bananas, —in the back yard sawing, hammering, spraypainting, yelling, rummaging, strangers arriving with backpacks, the phone ringing, press showing up to shoot photos and interview; inside people meeting on the staircase, noise in the music room material, yarn, dirt, and miscellany being made into last minute costumes and masks, collective cooking, cleaning and eating in the kitchen, sleeping bags and clothes everywhere and the next-door neighbor's back yard a tent city, more banging and drilling in the front yard, walls being collaged with xeroxes, finished mobile swamp creature sculptures lined up in the driveway and on the sidewalk, —nutso wonderful!

**Glen:** What is the most beautiful thing each of you has ever seen?

**Elizabeth:** Miekal's cock and Liaison Wakest. Besides that, I try not to believe in beauty. It is outmoded and deceptive.

**Miekal:** Beauty and ugliness are interchangeable examples of visual noise. The birth of our son Liaison was both enchanting and gut-wrenching. One can always find the opposite affection if you see everything.

**Glen:** What is a revolution?

**Miekal:** A revolution is everyone you know making tapes and printing magazines and books and running radio and cable shows and making contact on telephone and mail and computer and travelling all over to meet and enact a larger and larger force of artistic opposition to institutionalized art and music. The act of creating large-scale improvised art/action/noise festivals in public is the quickest way to mobilize isolated artists around the globe. To create an endless web of festivals which the fringe could migrate between. Festival of the Swamps is not a revolution. A thousand festivals for a thousand days would be. Mainstream culture is very terrified of the noise and chaos of the unpredictable. On an extended scale, cultural anarchy brings contemporary society much closer to its primitive beginnings of dancing and screaming.

**Glen:** What is the state of the mail underground, from where you sit observing?

**Miekal:** I keep getting the feeling that the experimental underground is rushing toward some sort of explosive power where collectively we will be impossible to sweep under the carpet. I think large exposure is inevitable, and it's much more a question of having control of the images that are created surrounding us. It is always easiest to be co-opted by the machine which makes everything into a bitesize capsule. At least most of the underground is not so easy to swallow. There is a lot of powerful individual work being done, mostly in isolation. Like I've said elsewhere, I think it's time for people to make a concerted effort to meet each other and throw some spark into the networking thing with person-to person contact.

**Elizabeth:** We really have an eagle's-eye view here, since we're involved in all the different aspects of the mail underground, from our strictly Mail Art projects like S.P.E.A.T. (the Society for the preservation of Envelope Art Transactions) to cassette-networking to publishing books and magazines, to all the idiosyncratic correspondences between individuals. I find myself constantly saying how exciting it all is, but the real question is why it's so exciting. Getting the mail every day is a



joy if only for the mystery of it. You never know what you'll get. There's always the junk, but that's pretty much a subjective thing. Ultimately I think even a glut of it is a good sign.

For the past two years, we've been receiving packages of original art from Segay and Nikonova in the Soviet Union. This is a revolutionary phenomenon in the 20th century US, let alone being able to behold this artwork itself. Talk about exciting, we fly to the post office like eager kids when we get a registered mail notice. Weird or cryptic notes from isolated eccentrics are always a treat. And we have recently been making contact with other kinds of networks: the American Gourd Society, the Seed-Saver's Exchange, various Cactus and Succulent Societies. We have to remember that other networks have existed long before Mail Art (the Sci-Fi community with all its magazines and conventions, is probably the best example). The continued and developing correspondences from peers in the network, especially long personal and thoughtful letters make "a good day for mail," and when someone writes to say they're considering a visit to Madison, that's very exciting. Phone conversations are an intermediary step before travel, and they are starting to occur more often, but I agree with Miekal that the next step is real person-to-person contact.

**Glen:** Why is it that Miekal is And while Liz is Was? Why and was? Then?

**Miekal:** If Glen thrashed her would bubbles explode in the air?

**Glen:** Explain how your works in various mediums (visual art, performance, music, writing) combine and work together. Do I make sense?

**Elizabeth:** Of course you make sense. We use the terms polyartistry and intermedia(r)tist. But the question's hard to answer because in every case the number and kind of media involved and the way they are combined is different. Our intermedlartistry is manifested most obviously in our performances (the Voyage 1984 Greta Garbo Limbo Flick is a good example), but it's always there in our heads: where a painter might think and see in terms of color, shape, and texture, we perceive and process things in terms of sound, imagery, words, movement and a myriad of other ways, not necessarily all at once, but in whatever combinations naturally present themselves. We simply put on our imaginary palette as much information and methodology and tools and materials as we currently have at our disposal, including things and ideas from realms outside of art. But again, this is hard to talk about in general terms. To give a specific example, you could ask me about our notion of "wakest" and I could tell you about our obsession with neologisms (including a compiling of a Dictionary of Neologisms), and how "wakest" is a "found" word, about our "Wakest International Reconstruction Movement", hand-drawn "grapho-wakism", the "Ego-Wakest Solos" tape, the surname we gave our son, the deck of wakest cards I have yet to publish, or an uncompleted wakest computer animation.

**Glen:** What is your definition of pornography?

**Miekal:** Pornography is the arbitrary abstractions of a fragmented cultural eroticism. Pornography is the inadequacy of our language to fulfill a million fantasies and include contradictory moralities. Subliminal seduction is pornography. If people would speak in the sounds of sex there would be no pornography.

**Elizabeth:** Pornography is all the sexual taboos taught (brainwashed) me via European culture, via 20th century white American society, via my mother, which I am now struggling to unlearn. The whole concept of pornography is a crime in itself which has helped institute a bigotry as nasty and deepseated as any racial, religious, or gender injustice. This injustice takes the form of legal action and social ostracization of so called sex offenders, and worse, leaves each of us sexually deprived, confused, out of touch with our sexual selves. Almost everyone you meet is sexually fucked up in one way or another. This is something I have only recently begun to understand, thanks to the brave and sober discussions about sex and society I have just read in a collection of essays called "Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Women's Sexuality".

**Glen:** How does "Qwa Digs" operate? Who is a member? How often does it perform? What happens when this occurs? What's next?

**Elizabeth:** Anyone who works and performs with us is for the time being a "member" of the group. There are those who have been involved so often over the years, like Aro and Drake Scott, who are in a sense always members, but the backbone is always Miekal and I. For a long time we yearned for a person w/similar methods and ideas who would commit themselves to working with us regularly, but it never worked out, I think because that person would have to be married to us. So we began devising performance structures that gave collaborators a lot of freedom as to what sort of role they'd play, how much time they'd put in, etc. For instance, for the "College of Particular Genius", anyone could lead any number of 15 minute "classes" or workshops of their choosing; some people also chose to spend an entire day with us to create the "College" installation. This



kind of participatory event has culminated in the Festival of the Swamps, where the possibilities for kinds and depth of involvement are almost unlimited, from people spending the week before the festival at our house building mobile sculptures and brainstorming, to passersby at the time of the event spontaneously joining in the noisemaking.

As in most of our activities, our operation as a performance group is aperiodic. There've been months when we've performed 7 times, and other 2 month stretches with no performances. If someone wants to set up a gig for us, or invites us to perform, we usually go for it. Where we used to like to break even, however, we have now begun to insist on some sort of monetary compensation. Each performance situation is so different: sometimes we devise a piece for a particular event or space, sometimes it's a mostly-musical (noisical) gig. Most of our work is text-related and we try to incorporate the optimum number of media. Since we always go for more rather than less, our performances are usually characterized by sensory barrage, peaked intensity, and juxtaposition of opposite elements: i.e.: "experimedia noise". All of our pieces are constructions for "improvised intermedia ritual", thus they are never repeated exactly, but rather evolve with each performance. We used to do a different piece everytime, but in the past few years we've been developing "repertory" pieces, like "THC", "The Birth of Gertrude Stein", and "Quabble".

Currently we are planning a mini east coast tour of "The Reconstruction of Qwabble", which is actually the third installation of our "Quabble" performance. The series is a ritual demonstration of the psycho-physiological transformations necessary in an environment of semantic and social decay. The work focuses in on one "family" in Babel in 9999 BC busily about their activities around the time of The Fall of the Tower of Babel. Each of us (including our son Liaison) has a station ("psycho-terrain panel") from which we perform. At no point during the actual performance is English ever spoken, except for a number of asides where one of us steps to the front and quickly and laconically explains what is happening in the Babelian mindset. Rather, invented language and babble (sound poetry), noise, and movement make up our communication during the piece. Costumes, masks, a sculptural "tower", invented and found instruments, plants, gourds, candles, sampler and tape deck and computer running a random speech and sound sample program will be used. Incorporating Liaison and our Mac computer into our performances (in fact into everything we do) comprises our major occupation these days and in the near future.

**Glen:** If you had to go live on a deserted tropical island, what ten items from home would you take with you?

**Miekal:** Not Factsheet Five

**Elizabeth:** My ten volumes of "Hypothetical Questions for Fun Dreams, Relaxation and Magazine Interviews".

**Glen:** Why do things always have to die?

**Elizabeth:** To make room for things being born. Death is an aspect of life. My most recent experience with it: in the two months before Liaison was born, our two cats, my most beloved cousin who was a drummer, and a boy I did art/music sessions with who had muscular dystrophy, all died. And Semantics Could Vanish recently did, so that the Floating Concrete Octopus could be born.

**Glen:** What else do you have to say?

**Elizabeth:** We both like to create our future by picturing it, talking about it, etc. We envision acquiring a piece of land some day, perhaps incorporating an unincorporated ghost town, and creating a living/working sculptural habitat on it, not a hippy commune but an anartistic bolo, where a garden and a computer can exist side by side, unlimited types of collaboration can take place, language can be reinvented, etc. We hope others in the network are thinking ahead towards this kind of thing and will perhaps join us in the coming years. Actually, with Tourism (live contact) following in the footsteps of Mail Art (postal contact), a logical next step would be people starting to move in with each other and creating studio/home environments together. Vee shell sea.

**Miekal:** We have declared our house a sovereign nation, Qwabel, and are encouraging others to secede from the union as well. My alter self Amendant Hardiker has recently created a couple pieces of interesting interactive beliefware for the computer. The first is a psychic anti-game called Zaum Gadget, where participants are led from image to quote to sound, never sure where they are or where they're going. The second is an audio sampler which I call the Plagersizer Samplizer which allows the computer to be a crazy sampler of sound effects. We have just used it in a live concert and the thing has a mind of its own. Its almost like having another person in our group. Within the next few years computers will become so cheap that they will be used in every aspect of



behavior. Electro-magnetic survival is a key issue for anyone creating works or ideas which are obscure or difficult. The age of digital information has insured that something once created takes on a mysterious life of its own, wonderfully out of control of the artist, to become virus or infamy or sensation or erased forever. As an instrument for filtering and activating cultural noise, the computer has become an indispensable 3rd arm. I've had nothing good to say about them for the last 10 years and now all of a sudden I'm on the other side, but I tell you: after you've pasted-up 150 books by hand, kept track of endless projects and contacts and whatnot, a computer means that we are freed from a little bit of the burden that we've created for ourselves.

Something we think about a lot is our networking magazine *Anti-Isolation*, which comes out rarely if ever. (Trying to get one out for the past nine months!) The act of reading, listening, and commenting about our own culture should be an intrinsic part of every artist's activity. If all artists put as much time into the collective shifting of culture as they put into their own work, we all would have a lot greater understanding of the divergence and breadth of what is now materializing. It is very irritating to me that people create work for the sole reason of getting a quickly written two sentence review in *Sound Choice* or *Factsheet Five*. Make something because it doesn't exist and because it can make some difference if used right. And all artists should be involved in review and critique. Networking mags should be coming out every day, and we should not have to be relying on a couple magazines to justify our existence. *LowLife* is a great example of the kind of publishing that needs to be undertaken. Even if you just publish one in your lifetime, at least it gives others a chance to know what you think.

A key subterfuge in the next 20 years will be to understand how our society has gotten to the point in time when information is money. No longer is it something material like gold or slaves or land. It is something so subjective and effusive that its exploitation is more volatile than ever. Knowing this fact and milking it to its every advantage will enable us to gain control of the institutional crumbling around us.



Liz at the Festival of Swamps '88



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The
- 1981  
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# Introic Enclodiacy

1986

Euy

Comspelling Trilled

1987

L-I-N-G-L-A-G-E

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No Moon, Dante

1988

Mores (pub by BombShelter Prop, Seattle)

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## Liz Was

1981

Eyeshadow

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I Come from the Nascent Beane

1984

Phrex Brain

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Compulsively, Spilled

Ancient Libraries from Kindergarten

1985

Onanism Curdles

1986

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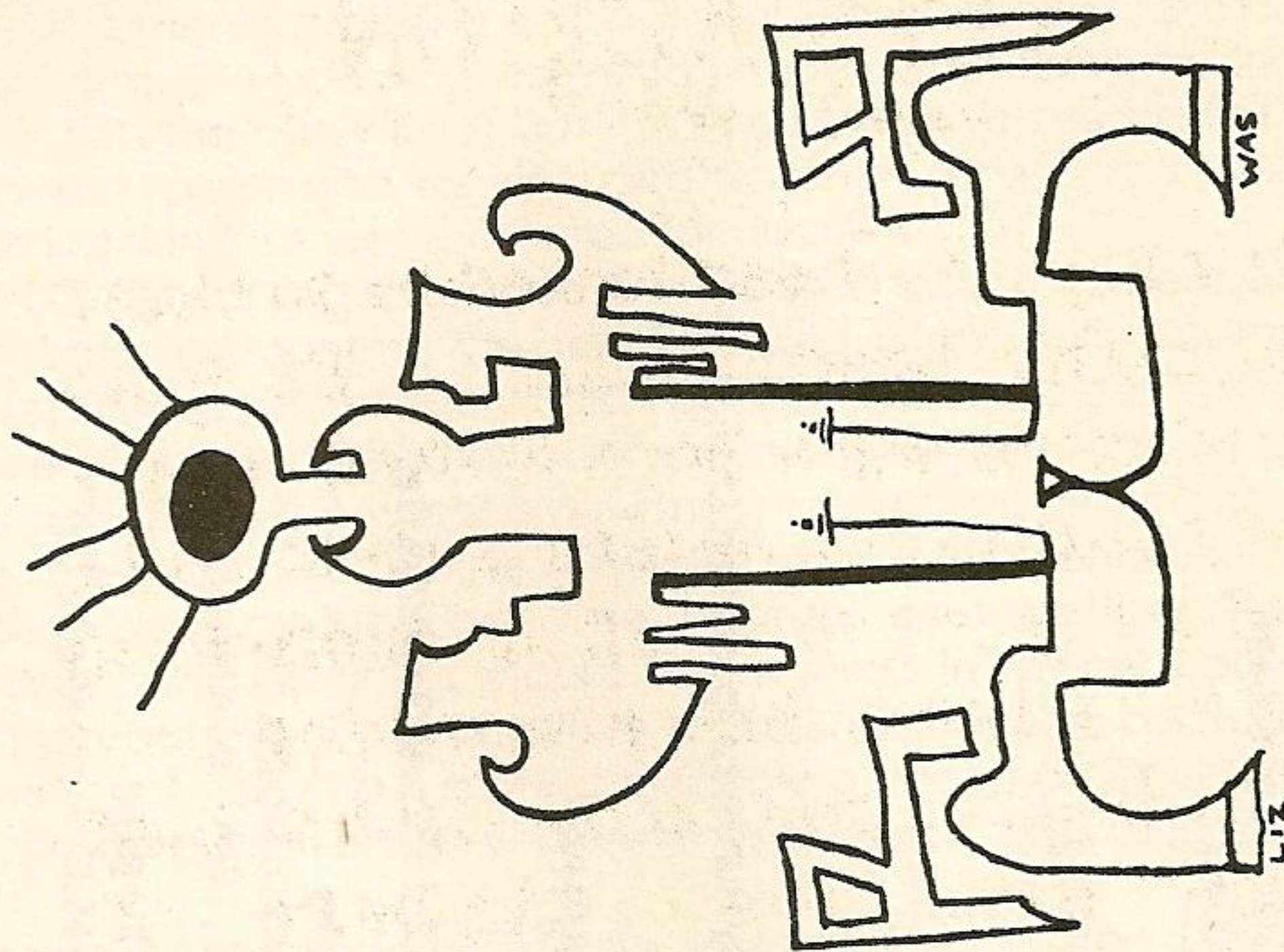
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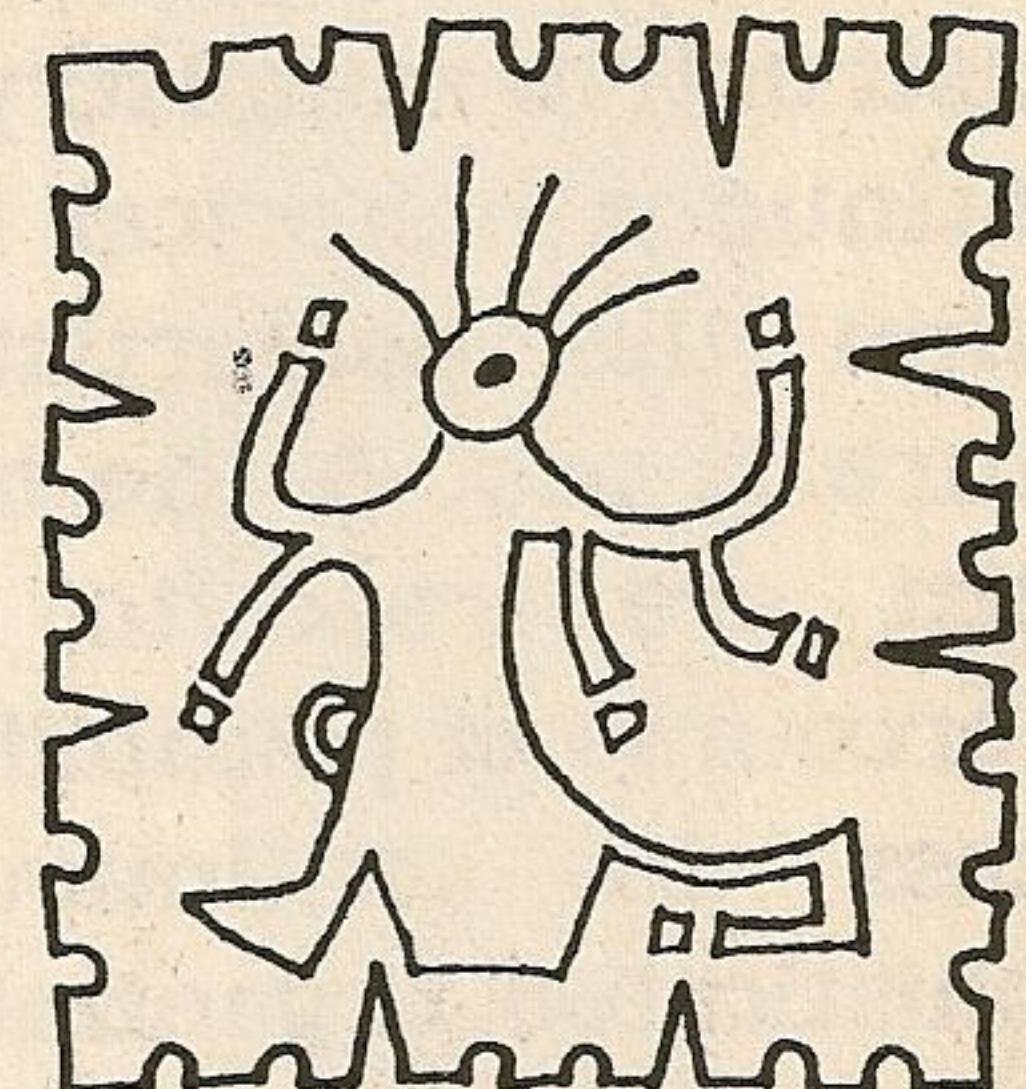
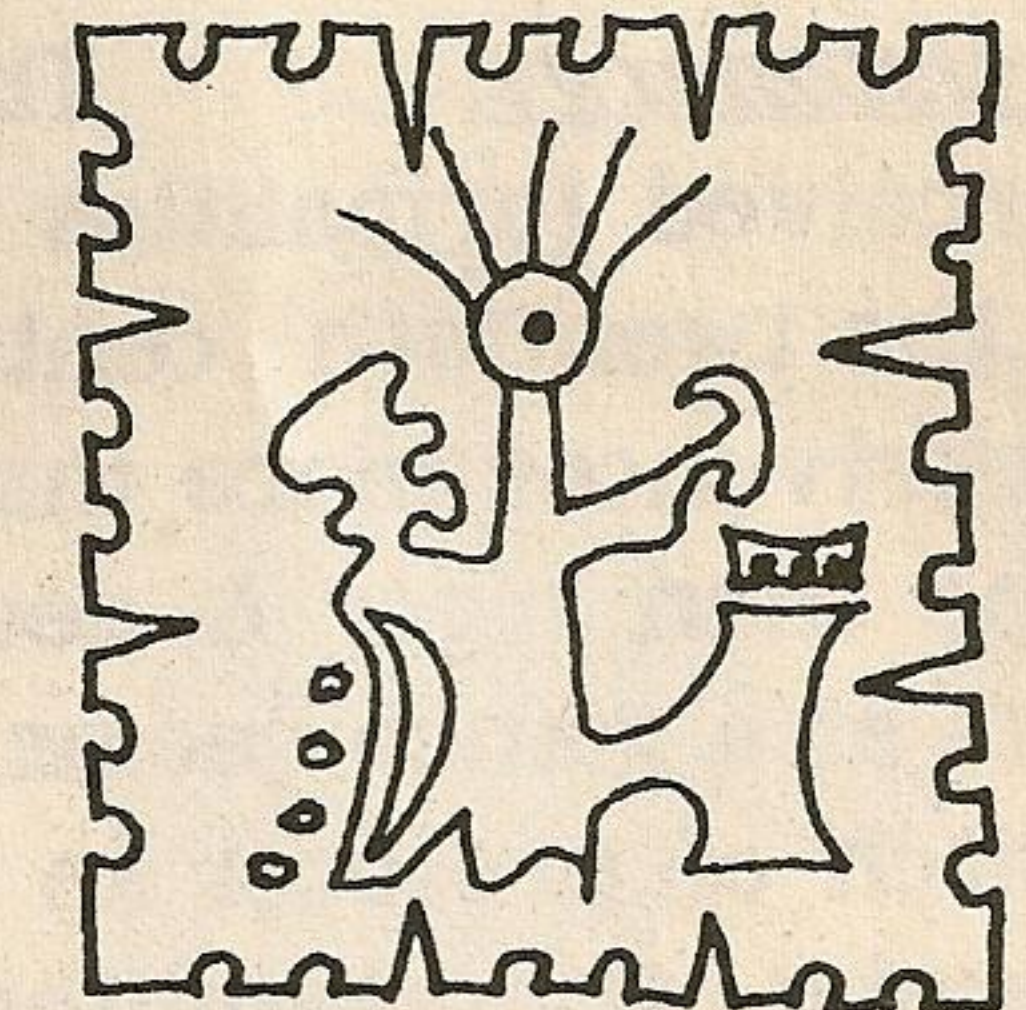
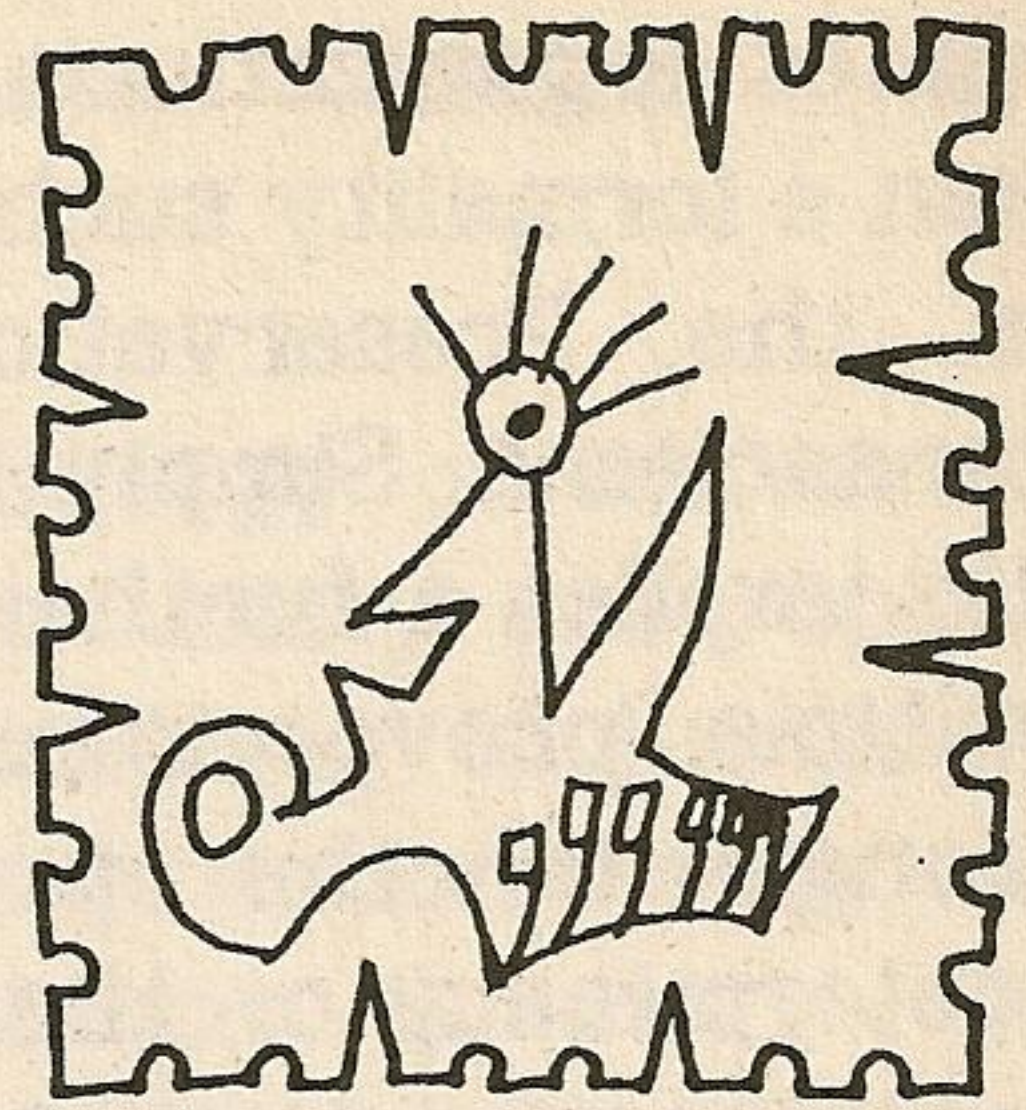




Miekal And

## BITE OF TEN THOUSAND ARTS ACTION

Polyartistry kept my head locked in so many places, too many heads of art. We were polyartistry as we were born & then every incoherency flutters & enters a child's life. They could have done it all & even been certain in its actions, but everything goes cockeyed & before you know it its been taken away from you. Anyway like polyartistry should have been to begin with, with all manner of throwing monkey-wrenches into the very gears that operate the heads of art. In the wee hours of every morning polyart dissolves into dailinesses' utter distractions & that is of essence, every very doing called the machine of the three-brained being, sunken below the surface of responsibility to the appearance of forms, or contrasted with velocity of marksmanship to a primitive need to succeed above all others to artforartforart. When no turning back means learning to adapt to the circumstances less desirable then previous fantasy / revelations should have it. The polyartist platform is always moving to be in a state of spinning. How can I tell what they might be thinking when youre always talking like a mouth object. Bother to spell out indifference & not be had or occupied by the consensus of body / mind split. I could be saying elseways but not tremor with the conviction of my inner thots. A polyartist



AIR WAKEST'87

by LIZ WAS



creates organizations of consequent events, even a formality such as a name like Society for the Preservation of Envelope Art Transactions, Simply by the invention of its title implies a furtherance & network of its multiple provocations. Polyartistry then belongs to the province of ideational indeterminacy or the caretakers of random mental associations has churned up more information than the human mechanism can healthily propagate. So consider an organization of an event which possesses all the qualities which enable the polyartist sympathy. Within its nocturne there is conceptual endlessness for invention, imagination & proximity of direct action. The polyartist swells with the caption of artistenergy. The disintegration of perceived formalities structures the input of the twentieth century, but there are no contrivances more insecure at this point in time than rigor & decorum. Ten thousand arts at a glance seems delusional but by the switch of protocol an anonymity of artistic placebo is catapulted post-haste toward constructive zaumistry. The probability of a continuous historical futurism is inevitable within the polyartistic credibility. The future is past & the multiple talents of the artist are freed to conduct a seductive intercourse of possibilities. A random global access to continuous invention & a sophisticated organization of all temporary flights of imagination so to build ballast enough to float. Polyartistry absorbs the momentum of overstimulation, or bends & coordinates the adverse damages into a provocation of the elementals. Once combined the hoped for bounty would be



EVENT GARDEN  
MUSEUM OF  
TEMPORARY ART

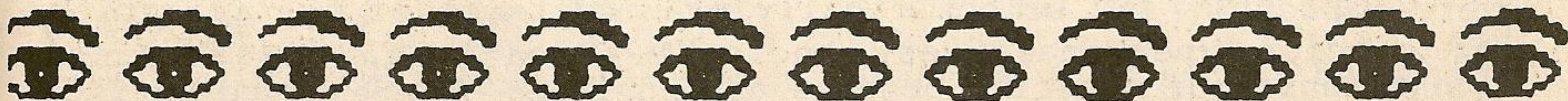
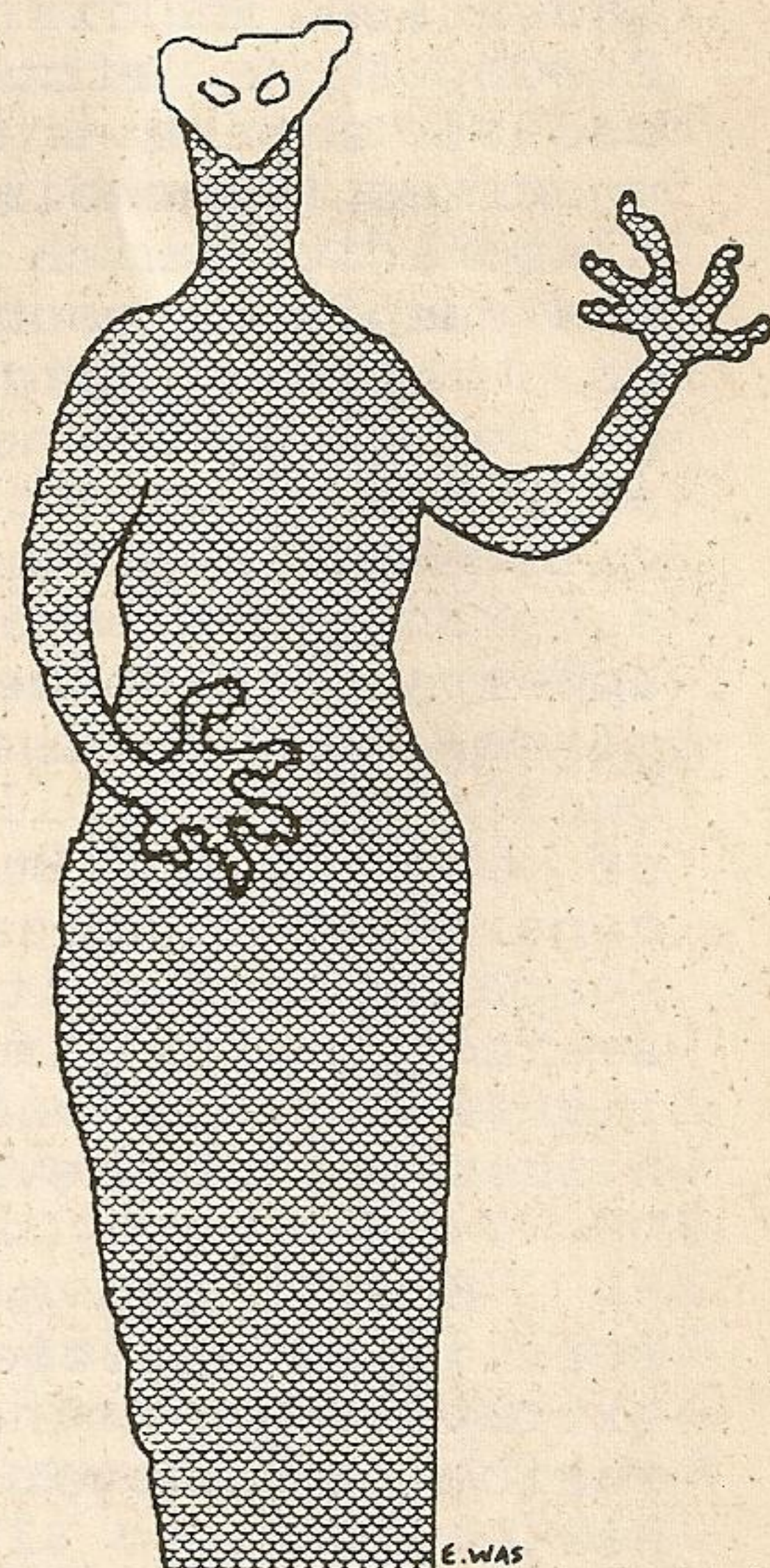


replagiarize



one of appropriate control over over-stimulants.

Resourcefulness; an energy of conversion. The distractions of virtuosity are replaced by a concentrated sculpting of juxtaposed media. No more infatuation with the probability of excellence & away with lifetimes of doing one thing well. Enter an approximate world of bending & shaping to a complex unpredictable global permutation. A con science of reconstructing all art without the dichotomy of taste, expectation, & representation not only destroys the culture factory but also activates the momentum necessary for continual surprise attack from the artistic underground.





M O N S T E       S

# FROM THE DICTIONARY

APOSTATIZE: TO ABANDON ONE'S BELIEFS OR CHURCH;  
TO FORSAKE ONE'S PRINCIPLES OR FAITH

NEXT WORD DOWN:

APOSTEMATATE: TO FORM INTO AN ABSCESS;  
TO SWELL AND FILL WITH PUS

APODEME: THE PLATES OF CHITIN WHICH PASS INWARD FROM THE  
EXOSKELETON OF ANTHROPODS AND DIVIDE AS WELL AS SUPPORT THE  
INTERNAL ORGANS

NEXT WORD DOWN:

APODICTIC: ABSOLUTE CERTAINTY

twisting free into a monstrous overlap of differences, the shingle effect of post-modernism is late is late modernist in its iteration in differences which the early moderns - Nietzsche, Freud, Marx, etc. - sought to excavate in various personal and social strata. This disseminative effect now threatens (or promises, depending on one's frame) to undo even the remainder of historicity which exceeds this overlap. This overlap, remainder, residue is compounded of certain ideas of connectivity, stability (of meaning, wholeness, 'presence' as it is now defined in philosophical and critical circles. The continued tectonic shifting, however of those great continent-like varieties of human existence continues to be engineered by the great modernist severing of historical sequence and positioning. Progress now appears, dichronically, as the untwisting or drift of these great plates rather than their being gathered into a comprehensive bundle of sensibilities and rational actions as the great figures of the late 19th century foresaw and for which there is considerable nostalgia now. This 'twisting free' from even the space of modernity (a space which was apparently incapable of seeing the full implications of its various programs) is only pre-figured by the post-modernist tropes of fragmentation, pastiche, historical retrieval and the like.

Everything now belongs to one genre or another, separate stratified entities which can undergo methodological excavation, extrapolation, and finally, the end result of monstration, the fusing of categories, the blurring, dislocation and creation of new boundaries. In other words: we devise techniques for teasing out differences, for finding iteration and difference in repetition, for further categorization and exemplification, only to find that we then become privy to the 'secrets' (since we have very patiently and scientifically exhumed them) of the formation of species, personalities, societal formations, the material constitution of material objects and entities, genres (and in fact have formed a literary genre - science fiction - because of our



infatuation with the cleverness of that methodology and its potential impact on human life). But the inevitable correlate of analytic process - synthesis - still awaits us. The question is: under what aegis will this take Place? Under all former system formations the lot of all analysis was to be sublated into a technological correlate with the human psyche, even if the ostensible target of analysis was the transcendental state of the human soul, inevitably the impact was measured in human dimensions. There was always an ethical underpinning so that the nature of epistemology and the nature of ethics seemed to be marks raised on the same substrate. In all times there has probably been incremental accretion (iteration) in knowledge systems and formation of investigative methodologies with the difference that the torsion thus induced in systems of 'presence' had nowhere near the effect of modern philosophies of absence, driven by the analytic methods of science. The thing that comes after all the moderns is the fusion of genres, the confusion of species, the interchangeability of the sexes, the dissection and re-alignment of selves, the fabrication of virtualities, an intense indifference leading to blurring (let us not forget that blurring comes from great speed in relation to a fixed point of view also). We are in the realm of monsters.

"... 'monster' also means something shown, proven, or demonstrated - like an idea or argument. From the Latin 'monstrum', 'monster' originally meant a divine portent or warning, so that from the outset it has born a prophetic relationship to, or has been a sign of, the future... the French 'monstre' (a relative of 'monster', to show) was once in English a now obsolete form of monster, and meant both something huge or enormous, and a demonstration or proof, something shown or exhibited. A whole family of English words reflects this conjunction: 'monstrable' means capable of being shown or 'monstrance' means demonstration or proof; to 'monstrate' is to prove; a monstration means a demonstration and the archaic verb 'to monster' meant to exhibit or point out. Theory, then, the showing or demonstration of an argument or concept, is not only bound up with vision, but the very notion of showing is itself bound up with, or indeed a synonym for, monstrosity: monstrosity is as involved with demonstrating and proving as proving is with monstrosity."

Barbara Freeman in  
"Substance"

Thus, the category of the monstrous is not, strictly speaking, a category at all but rather the node at which categories cross and blur. Also, the point at which such a singularity becomes manifest. The confusion of categories is necessary but not sufficient to create the singular. With the emergence(y) comes the monstrous, a demonstration of the crossing, the singularity is the crossing, at the occasion of the crossing and not the assemblages or typologies in either side. It is not even a point of gathering and then dispersal as perhaps an evolutionary theory would posit for an singular arena for punctuated evolutionary change. There is no genealogy which can issue from the monstrous (for the same reason that theory is sterile) or the singular, no proliferation or replication of its kind, for it is not a 'kind' (and perhaps for that very reason cannot be kind since the ethical



variant of the term would seem to be tied to the necessity of there being more than one of a kind. Thus, being a kind of and being kind to are inextricably linked. That is precisely why we fear the monstrous: it is not a kind of anything and hence is not susceptible to the cultural blandishments and social controls which 'kinds' and 'kins' must operate within. It is not that its controls are absent but that they are fused and can't be operated either historically/diachronically or ethically/synchronously. No appeal can work because there is nothing to appeal to and nothing to work toward or against. What can work against something which is out-of-history and from which one can take no hostages?

In Western culture, X marks the spot of the unknown, as in more than one science fiction film from the fifties, but it is more properly a chiasmic X, a place of meeting, crossing and reversing; and while it is not replicable, it may be repeating or perhaps even iterative. (It may not be possible to adjudicate the positioning of the line between repetition/iteration as regards the emergence of the monstrous since such judgements rely on standards of historicity which the singular repudiates and effaces





and, from the point of the planar assemblages ('normality') fore and aft of X-marks-the-spot, defaces.

To quote Rudolfe Gasché, "Chiasm or chiasmus is an anglicization of the chiasma, which designates an arrange of two lines crossed like the letter X (chi) and refers in particular to cross-shaped sticks, to a diagonally arranged bandage, or to a cruciform incision. As a grammatical and rhetorical device, the figure of chiasm corresponds basically to inverted parallelism." p.xvi, intro. to Readings in Interpretation, Warminski.

Conceptually, Gasché points out that chiasm is "one of the earliest form of thought: it allows the drawing apart and bringing together of opposite functions or terms and entwines them within an identity of movements" and that "chiasmic reversals secure [because of this inverted parallelism] the agreement of a thing at variance with itself." *ibid.*

What is of primary interest to us here, however, is not some primitive (as in prime) dialectics, although that point of intersection is necessary for an understanding of the monstrous, but rather the extent to which this folding of opposites over and past one another leaves an unaccountable residue, an unsublatable portion, an unequal prong of the X or as Derrida puts it "the chiasm folds itself with a supplementary flexion." (from positions quoted from Gasché). In *The Law of Genre*, Derrida further elaborated the chiasmic invagination which makes problematic the notion of the boundary, or a distinct delineation of the set of conditions which constitute the extent of the range of an ensemble. Therefore, non-closure is always, at the least, a possibility; all the conditions for boundary maintenance cannot be fully enumerated or demonstrated. The attempt to de-monstrate (beyond the confines of the enclosure - and hence to 'show' the enclosure itself) is a monstrosity. It is not that the chiasmic point cannot be captured, it is that it cannot be fully captured: the residue is the haunting, a return and a subsequent blurring.

This inverted, parallel, incompletely recuperative, non-closeable state of affairs is the condition of genre and typology (and signature) on one side and the condition of loss, combination, smearing and monstrosity on the other. It is the always open transformative possibility and its subsequent collapse and falling away.

On one side there is the optic, the condition of possibility of seeing, a photo-tropism which guides and arranges along the lines of orientation which are peculiar to the eye and the distinctions it must have to operate. Modernism, Western culture and philosophy are phenomena of the eye par excellence, the sun god shines benevolently on them, bestowing its sharp outlines and quick co-ordination in the light of the noon-day.

But past the fold, along the supplementary fluxion and down the unequal fork, skoto-tropism prevails, an orientation towards large, dark masses. The eye has no purchase here because there is no light; or rather only a light refracted through a dense and turgid medium (porous but not transparent), a presence defined through its lack. It is the pull of a vacated space, of a vacuum.

The monstrous is not this vacuum but rather the filling of this emptiness, not with the straight edges of definition, of signing, of typologizing epistemological increments which gradually build a rational space but rather the gloppy





splatterings of cells which have lost their membranes, their 'integrity', and yet retain the now un-wholey urge to merge, to complete their visibility out of the glare and gaze of the sun (re-call the glottals of Derrida's Glas), where their parts cannot be enumerated. But that is precisely the 'problem' for the count goes wrong: there are too many or not enough eyes, legs, arms, testicles, noses. And bits of debris have been sucked in, pieces of machinery, rectangular blocks, gears chips of stone, slabs of flesh. But the ability to clear the path, to clean house (heimlech), to count properly, to find the edge has been lost due to a skotoma, a dark spot in the field of vision. That spot made manifest (de-monstrated) is the crossing, the chiasmus, the monstrous fusion of effects, devices, organisms: an event can't be seen, can't be written and can only be felt in its perturbation of effect, of history. A black body, passing through, un-reflected but deflecting, fractionating, speciating and fusing. Bending and warping are but precursors. There is a torsion.

BY ROBERT CHEATHAM



# Arcturus Among Us

interview by A. Keith Goshorn

The following text represents only the first part of an interview with the husband and wife team that operates probably the largest book and information distributing outlet in the US on UFO's (Unidentified Flying Objects) and related interests in the "unknown" and the "unexplainable". Bob and Monica Girard appear to make a decent living doing only what they are most consumed by, pursuing this marginal subject which has been part of their daily concerns since childhood—his in New York State and hers in Ecuador. In fact it was their correspondence through Arcturus Book Service which Bob had already started that brought them together, and as they describe it, was maybe even part of the "cosmic reason" for its creation. Their own story is interesting enough, but suffice it to say that they seem to be rather proud of having found a "meaningful way of beating the system, of staying out of the rat-race"—no small feat these days. Their present opinions and perspectives on UFOlogy and people from outer space are not at all what one might expect.

Except for occasional rather *retro*-sounding opinions on people who listen to "beat-boxes" all day and on the lower hierarchical position of animals relative to humans (though they claim we're just as "ignorant" of species a corresponding "octave" above us), they seem to be intuitively in synch with poststructuralist attitudes on multiple realities, refusing to look for a single version of "truth". (Their favorite saying: "Belief is the Enemy!") Yet, at other times they can sound like determined rationalists with a sober faith only in the saving power of clear thinking.

One might detect a sense of isolated, dogged individualism in their views that seems to leave responsibility for the world's problems up to everyone else, but their position on the current state of affairs is far from the short-sighted materialism or the ostrich posture struck by the local breed of Yuppies. The Arcturus vision is closer to a healthy disgust with the mess all around us. What urban postpunk survival artist wouldn't empathize with these UFOlogists' summary statement about this fucked-up world: "Let this end! Let it end!" They at least seem to be checking out all possible "escape routes". Can you say as much for your strategy to avoid capture by the "apparatus of the State"? These Arcturians underscore the simple but forgotten fact that to live outside the system, you've got to think outside the system.

They were interviewed late this winter in their home in Stone Mountain (books in the basement) where they are apparently seeking anonymity from the culture that is "asleep" all around us. For the purposes of this interview, Monica is Arcturus 1 (A-1) and Bob, Arcturus 2 (A-2); LowLife (LL) was forced to interview them on a terribly hung-over grey Sunday afternoon:

**LowLife:** How long have people been seeing flying saucers, UFO's and so forth?

**Arcturus-2:** Kenneth Arnold gets credit for beginning the UFO Age... It's his sighting on June 24, 1947 that has more or less gone down in history—wrongfully, actually—but it's gone down in history as beginning the modern UFO Age. However, real UFO activity doesn't start too much before 1947. During 1943 and 1944, American flyers on bombing runs would occasionally report something they called "Foo Fighters." The Americans thought they were some sort of German sensing or reconnaissance devices. Except that the German flyers reported the same thing and thought it was some kind of American reconnaissance device! Nobody knows what they were. They had the ability to violate our reality: there are cases in which they would literally penetrate the fuselage of the bombers and then shoot out the other side, or they'd pace the flyers and then shoot off out into space in a split second and so forth. That happened during the war, and it never was resolved, but the intelligence community did take that seriously at the time. In 1946 and 1947 Phase II begins, in the form of something that was called Ghost Rockets. This was largely a European phenomenon and specifically over Sweden and Norway—strange rocket-shaped devices by the hundreds were seen in the skies. This is very interesting since not long before the Germans had developed the V-1 and V-2 rockets during the war. And surely at that time the Russians were working on rockets by that point. In fact, the Russians had confiscated a lot (several) of the German rocket scientists after the war. So who knew—except that I would think it would have been risky. If you were a Russian, you wouldn't want to test such things over Western countries. You wouldn't want them to fall into Western hands. So it doesn't seem they were a Russian invention nor does it seem like they would be an American invention being tested so near to the Russian territory. This wave lasted a full year and nobody knew what they were. They were photographed etc., etc... And so that brings us to 1947 and the first real UFO's and the beginning of the disc-shaped UFO's era.

**Arcturus-1:** And also the green fireballs.



**A-2:** Yeah, green fireballs were another aspect of the early days of the UFO Age. The panorama has changed so much from those early days. The UFO experience has evolved from simple fly over in those early 40's and 50's reports to the point where today it involves abductions and biogenetic experimentation, and it's a steady progression of complexity—people really, many people who think about UFO's really have no idea that there has been a distinct evolution of this whole phenomenon. It's gone from the very simple—if UFO's flying over your airspace is a simple thing to begin with—to the extremely complex, involving these humanoid aliens who are taking sperm samples and ova samples and doing who knows what with them! And emptying minds of their contents—that's been reported—and all kinds of bizarre and ominous phenomena things are now taking place which never took place in the 50's.

**A-1:** Yes, in the 50's they were only taking soil samples and things like that.

**LL:** But you tend to discount this also?

**A-2:** We think it indicates something... but it doesn't compute in our reality.

**A-1:** Yeah, we think what the people are reporting is not what is really happening. I think they're putting false memories in people...

**LL:** Oh, the aliens are putting their memories in the humans'?

**A-2:** They're called "screen memories"—a boy will see that he has a scar on his knee—for example,—and yet won't remember how that happened exactly... It'll be something like he fell off his bike or he ran into a barbed wire fence and cut his knee, when in fact this had nothing to do at all with that scar. If for some reason the boy undergoes a hypnotic regression, because perhaps other symptoms indicate that perhaps there was some kind of UFO experience involved in this, they're very likely to find out that the scar was made during a sample-taking episode during a UFO abduction...

**A-1:** Which also happened during the Middle Ages—you see the same thing in the Middle Ages with the witches—the priest would look for the "Mark of the Devil", as it was called.

**LL:** Ah-hah!

**A-2:** ...some sort of scar or mark.

**A-1:** And that's exactly the same thing...

**A-2:** ...in space-age trappings, that's all.

**LL:** So in which direction does that lead you? ...to think that a phenomenon no less real is happening... but in which, perhaps the human explanations have been off the mark, or not accurate?

**A-2:** Not so much false as just the product of not following through with thinking. Is it realistic to think that extraterrestrial species would have to conduct the same experiments for 3000 years? If they're so far advanced technologically beyond our levels, do they really need 1000 years of blood samples to learn what one sample could tell them? All of this tends to lead one away from extraterrestrial thinking towards terrestrial thinking: the idea that these beings, whatever they are, share our own sphere of influence with us, but at an unperceived level of reality, another octave, if you will.

**A-1:** They provide a human explanation—an explanation for humans—for what's happening, but I don't think that is what's happening.

**LL:** You mean all the talk of extra-planetary visitors and vehicles is merely to... throw us off...

**A-2:** It's a convenient way for them to manifest here so that we might be detoured away from the correct analysis or thinking...

**A-1:** Like why should they be coming from Venus or Mars instead of from Jupiter or Rigel or Veda Reticula... or Andromeda?

**LL:** But you still think this is a deliberate act of manipulation on the part of whomever, whatever... planting screen memories, etc.?

**A-2:** Absolutely, sure—who wants to be discovered?

**LL:** Yeah, especially by these insane earthlings. But the debunkers want to dismiss all this altogether, saying of course, saying this is some sort of human delusion, psychological imbalance, etc.—But you would never say it's not real?

**A-1:** It's happening.

**A-2:** Absolutely, it's real!

**A-1:** We just don't know what the meaning of it is. We just don't know what the purpose is. If you read what the people are saying and what they were told by the aliens, you find these people being put under hypnotic regression and remembering being abducted and having a medical examination and all this but they always come to a block, to where there's a mental block and they cannot get through that.

**A-2:** Not even hypnosis can break through that wall.

**A-1:** And they all keep saying that the moment is "not yet" or "I won't tell you right now, but it will be known, later, it's not time yet!"

**A-2:** And that itself is part of a progression. In the fifties there were no UFO abductions... This begins really only around 1967 in the case of Antonio Villas-Boas, a very famous case. In 1961 you have another famous milestone case, the Betty and Barney Hill case in which they're taken on board a UFO and Betty Hill goes through this pregnancy exam. Then in 1967 there was the case of Villas Boas:

**A-1:** Villas-Boas was a cross breeder. He had sex with an alien.

**A-2:** Yeah, he had sex with an alien woman.

**A-1:** For breeding purposes...



**A-2:** Yeah, the content of that experience was rather simple, Betty Hill's was more complex. Herbert Schermer, in 1967, is even more complicated because now they're beginning to explore the mind and putting stuff in the mind so that Herbert Schermer runs into a block, and he won't reveal the rest, it's not time... and then in the 70's you get all of the above plus some new features.

**LL:** But this is said often, that "it's not time"? And even under hypnosis.

**A-1:** Yes and what it makes you think the conclusion you draw is...

**A-2:** Someone is manipulating (you), them.

**A-1:** What it makes you think is that all these people are being studied for something, and that there will be a trigger at some point, sometime in the future that will cause all of them to do something...

**LL:** But you believe that part of it?

**A-1:** No... it's a possibility. If you know, if we're to believe that these aliens are here, and they're making tests and all of that, it would seem that that's what's happening, that they're programming these people to perform some kind of activity at a certain moment. That's the picture that you get.

**A-2:** Because the time frame isn't known, they might maintain a bank of humans with implanted information for such a time as may or may not happen anytime soon when perhaps they will release that information. In other words, we would be more comfortable having our own flesh and blood humans explaining something on behalf of the aliens. We'd be more comfortable with that than coming from the very scary aliens themselves.

**A-1:** There's a feature here that's becoming more frequent. You find that there's a human on board the flying saucer that's cooperating with the aliens. Many people describe this.

**A-2:** Yeah there already are humans on board as intermediaries apparently. Some of these abductees are taken and used, they're now a part of their civilisation and used as intermediaries...

**A-1:** The researchers don't know what to make of this...

**A-2:** There's no end to the complexities of all this. Now they're telling the abductees, they tell them "We're going to come back..."

**LL:** But all this kind of thing is in the popular lore and mythology now because of all the films and science fiction stuff...

**A-2:** They're based on this! These movies are based on this.

**LL:** Right, but the problem is that once a movie is made, and that image, those images are out there in the popular imagination something else can happen, then, when a person would see something... he/she might interpret it in the terms or images of...

**A-2:** Conditioning.

**LL:** Yeah, sort of pre-conditioning.

**A-1:** Now they're showing the abductees a little baby and telling them: "This is yours." ...you know, the results of a cross-breeding. This is a new development, and we have several cases of this.

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LL: Ah, great!

A-2: That's also similar to a medieval motif.

A-1: Yes, and in the folklore of the faeries you find human females abducted for sexual purposes.. and kidnapping of little babies, or exchange of babies—the faery would come and put one of theirs in place of your baby which they took.

(Note: A Japanese sci-fi film set in feudal time (and perhaps based on a myth) features an alien "replacement" for the recently deceased daughter of a humble peasant couple. A strange metallic egg has dropped from the sky after an apparent explosion of a meteorite. The child that emerges from the egg is taken by the grieving parents as the return of their lost one, except that this one has distinct glassy eyes and acts a bit unusual.)

LL: Well, this is all very interesting, but when you begin to see the similarities over large periods of time, don't you...

A-2: Yes, it's tempting to write off UFOlogy as folklore-in-the-making. But that is to underestimate what is going on... seriously underestimate.

A-1: What is going on now, if you compare it with the past, you have to see it (the past) in a different way—it makes you think again: the gods also abducted people for sexual purposes! You have the kidnapping of Persephone and...

LL: Right, but some people will of course say that there always exists a natural human fantasy—making process...

A-2: It goes with the territory...

A-1: But it's not always fantasy!

A-2: It happens to some of us so that others may reflect upon it, or something like that. Who knows what process it is. But we are people who help others with the study material. That's the bottom line, really.

A-1: Catholic priests were writing stories that the parishioners would report to them, you know Incubus and succubus and all that. But in those days they would just call it the Devil, and it was the same thing. And today if you go to the countryside in my country you'll find people in South America who say: "Here I am, I'm sleeping in my bed all of a sudden there is this presence and it's making (love) to me..." They cannot see it, but they know it's there.

LL: Yes, and of course this is where psychologists or psychoanalyst would say that it's a typical human phenomenon where the person cannot cope with their sexual fantasies or even their own sexual actions so that they have to explain them some other way.

A-1: Yes, but it has a limit (psychology).

A-2: Somehow I always thought that was rather lame. I don't like psychology very much.

A-1: You can explain some cases like that, but not all of them. There are cases that are real strange.

A-2: You have to debunk maybe 99% of them, maybe 999 of 1000 that you're looking into. But you'll find one that will provide you with some new insight, just one that will help you to come to a new level of understanding, and you keep going like that.

A-1: That's another reason why the people from the country will believe in the UFO's because in our countryside they believe in the unknown. And we have been calling that superstition.

LL: Yeah, because they're not so conditioned by scientific rationality, where we would write off anything really unusual and not believe it.

A-1: Yes, but something is going on, and you keep listening to it. I have an uncle who is quite agnostic, he doesn't believe in religion or priests or anything, but he also lives in the countryside because he has a farm and, for instance, he told us a story about the campesinos on this farm who told him about a light that appeared on top of the railroad. And whenever they see this light they run to their houses and hide because, they say, that it's evil, and he kept saying that, oh, he didn't believe this. So he told the people to call him the next time they saw the light. So one night they called him up and said "The light is there! Come see it!". And he went and he said he could see these little balls of blue light hovering over the railway. So because he's agnostic he made a joke, saying "Light, Why don't you come over here?" ...you know, and all of a sudden the thing started coming with fabulous speed towards him—and he was scared to death, and he said he flew up out of there, and then suddenly it went back to where it had been, and he said he just could not explain that, whatever it was, I do not know.

LL: Well, OK then, what more can you say about such things? Where does it all stand for you today? What more can you say beyond your earlier explanation of an octave or higher above us as humans, separated by some kind of gap that makes communication difficult if not impossible between octaves? OK, so there's another level, another octave of reality above us that isn't necessarily that of beings from another planet, or entities from other planets in the universe, but...?

A-2: They live here! We all share the same planet.

LL: OK, I'm just trying to summarize now what your views are to make sure that I'm interpreting you correctly. What beyond that can you say—beyond the contention that there are some kind of beings or entities in a parallel octave above us?

A-2: It seems to me that our immediate problem is really that of the human condition. All of this is simply an exercise in the evaluation of the answers to those troubling questions: Who am I? what am I doing here? Do I



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have something specific to do? If so, why don't I remember what it is I'm supposed to do? And where to go from here? All of these questions, the total of which add up to the meaning of my existence, to me are the central issue of my existence. This is what must be answered or at least understood to the best of my ability. UFO's are perhaps the most convenient way to begin to study so that you may reach some of your answers or at least a partial answer to those questions. In the process you begin to see just how precarious all of human existence, not just yours, but all of human existence is, and just how precarious, what a house of cards at this point, far too many, and wow! what a splash that's going to make if it begins to come down. This is a by-product of UFO study, or the study of any phenomenon for that matter. To me it's a wonderful exercise as an individual in trying to find answers to the questions that trouble me. And in the process I begin to understand the entire human panorama...

LL: The human condition.

A-2: The human condition.

LL: Well, then one might hear that and think that for you it really doesn't matter whether UFO's are real or not.

A-2: There is little in my octave that I can do: we're absolutely defenseless if they come from an octave that has a degree of power over us as we do over creatures in lower octaves. If that is the situation, and I see no reason to doubt it, we have absolutely no defense if they choose to be offensive. It's on their terms that these events happen—never on our terms.

LL: Well, OK, but then you're being more specific than I thought, because you're granting them supra-human powers.

A-2: I can't do a damn thing about that. The only person I can do anything for in this entire world is myself! And what can I do for myself? I can try to understand more than I did before—that to me is it. And the reality or non-reality of UFO's is not exactly a burning issue. I don't have to prove a thing there. I do have to prove a very different thing to myself, and that is the central issue of my life. And that to me is ideal UFOlogy. That's what everybody could do with this stuff. And to the extent that they're still worrying about whether they come from Mars or Venus, or what kind of uniforms do they wear on Wednesdays—that's missing the point.

A-1: (laughs)...and looking for tracks and all of that!

A-2: Yeah. The guys that are trying to prove those things physically, are missing the point.

LL: Yeah, that's similar to some of the drift of Continental European philosophy these days, concerning the pointless attempt to hold on to the "Real," or how trying to determine the Truth with a capital "T" is missing the point.

A-1: The phenomenon is real (of UFO's etc.). We just don't know what it is.



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is welcome and expected.

LL: But it still seems to me that your particular interpretation about this higher octave or an other octave that we can't directly communicate with or that it's dangerous to do so is a very specific and maybe a limiting explanation; why not try to communicate with them?

A-2: Yes, but in the end I have very little to say on the matter at all. Anything along these lines that happens, happens on their terms, not on human terms.

LL: Well, couldn't one say that that is just an analogue of the way some people talk about, say, God as superior Being, almost... "I don't have any control about what happens, it's all up to this other greater Reality..." etc.?

A-1: I think that what we have to do is to try to understand in a way that will free us from being slaves, from being conditioned, and all that. That's what matters.

A-2: We try to be as free of both "conspiracies"—the human and the alien.

A-1: It's like cutting the umbilical cord. It's hard...

A-2: To be a genuine individual, to be free and independent as best you can. We need that outer material framework, we have to live in it, partially. But we've also fixed up our lives so that 24 hours a day, we can, if we like, continue to seek our answers together. We've beat the System—better than many, many people have. We didn't exactly plan it this way, but it worked out for us, beautifully.

A-1: You just have to keep looking. Probably we'll die doing it!

LL: OK, good. Here's one last question that some of our readers might want to have answered: where does that leave you then in terms of your perceived social responsibilities in regard to the social or political realities of that outside world of the "System" and however it may or may not impinge upon you?

A-2: I reject it! I know it's false, it's wrong. It is part of the problem, a big part of the problem. You and your readers probably reject it as much as I do. You know it's bankrupt!

LL: Of course it is. But there are those who would maintain that to just beat the System by trying to stay outside of it without giving attention to any of the injustices it perpetrates is to somehow be complicitous or at least somewhat of a cop-out. This was the same debate around "dropping-out" in the sixties. How would you respond to those voices?

A-2: I'd much rather concentrate on the 1000 people or so that we help this way, because in the end, each of us saves ourselves. And if there is an injustice perpetrated out there, if somebody is doing a number on somebody else, that's a two-way street. Both victim and oppressor are wrong in that system, and I don't feel that I have any responsibility at all to either of them.

LL: What if you end up suffering from some of those same conditions or injustices?

A-2: Then we'll do our best to adapt, or we'll die, we'll go under. I don't know. That's a hard one to answer,... but thus far we haven't had to address that problem.



LL: But don't you speak out in your reviews in the book catalogues you publish?

A-2: Yeah, my catalogues are full of it. I comment a lot on the decline of civilization, but only as a service to my 1000 people, I do take on a moral obligation...

A-1: The problem is that if human beings don't change rapidly, completely, nothing is going to change.

A-2: And that's a terrible problem: each of us has to have a total self-transformation, and nobody is ready, they haven't even begun! Only those people who have begun are of interest to me.

A-1: The problem is in the human (consciousness) and if everybody doesn't have a radical change, nothing is going to change, there will always be sets of victims and victimizers. That's the story of this planet; all that changes is who's up and who's down, like the Hindus said about the Wheel.

LL: So what are the beginnings of the radical changes you're talking about?

A-2: There aren't any yet, as far as I can see. It's futile, futility to even think of it.

A-1: You have to eliminate the selfishness.

A-2: Let this end, let it end!!! Really.

(laughter all around)

A-2: To me the best thing that could happen would be to let this one collapse, let the 4 1/2 billion (humans) be eliminated now... let some kind of remnant start over and hopefully avoid—except that they won't you see because the bad will survive by chance along with the good and we're doomed to repeat the cycle at least one more time... because we will not choose, ourselves, to fix up what we know is wrong—we will not do it! We will not act, and therefore, we've condemned ourselves to repeating this one more time. And that induces in each of us a sort of hopeless feeling that all these things are so far gone there will never be any way to correct them. There's a kind of hopelessness that prevails, and we deserve whatever the inevitable result of that is going to be! We deserve it because we will not act on our own behalf: oh, it won't play in Peoria, it won't play in the Vatican. There are all sorts of social reasons for not doing it.

A-1: I still think selfishness is the problem.

LL: What do you think of the current intellectual contention that the self or our cherished "subjectivity" is actually only a specifically Western cultural construction, and in that sense, an illusion, a fabrication... our notion, that is, of each of us being born with a unique individual self or soul is a fading cultural myth that can no longer really manifest anyway in an age completely saturated with media simulations and simulacra (copies of copies)?

A-2: Well, I like to feel that I am will, I like the feeling of self. I think it's a great feeling. I am Will, and one of the things I will is to get out of this human sphere!

LL: Hear! Hear! Let's get on with it, get on out of here!

A catalogue of Arcturus titles can be obtained by sending 10¢ to Arcturus Book Service, POB 831383, Stone Mountain, Ga., 30083-0023, USA.

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# CONTACTS

**Archive Issue** is a thin newsletter of information, with a few reviews. Not a fanzine really, but a fan's effort to exchange information, this is in English and covers music and related matters of an experimental bent. Write to Gianfranco Santoro, Via Adige, 8-33010, Colugua (UD)—Italy.

**William Dockery** has dozens of badly drawn minis like *Dub Golem* and *Demon House*. For a few pennies he'll stuff your mailbox with the things. What a deal. His address is 3226 A River Ave., Columbus, Ga., 31904, USA.

**Factsheet Five Projects.** Besides his valuable magazine Mike Gunderloy offers a bunch of other services/products. Perhaps the most interesting is the Zine Exchange. Editors are encouraged to send extra copies of their zines to be distributed for free to "people who don't even know you exist," and anyone who is interested can send a "SASE with 25¢ to \$2.40 postage," and Mike will fill it with goodies. Also of interest to editors: Mike will send a list of distributors who are interested in picking up new publications. There's also the Factsheet Five mailing list of over 2200 names on self-adhesive labels for \$80 or on plain paper for \$60. He's also got specialty lists. Write for details and more and send \$2 for the magazine, while you're at it, and find out about all this stuff yourself from Mike Gunderloy, 6 Arizona Ave., Rensselaer, N.Y., 12144-4502, USA.

**Harvard Square Records.** These people (person?) are attempting to cash in on the CD craze by selling vinyl to panicky "record collectors" at full price under the pretext that the chance may never come again, but only a fool would believe that shit. While it may well be true that the chance to buy old major label releases on record at full list price will not soon come again, there has never been a better time to buy them used. As CD suckers are selling off their Beatles, Rolling Stones, and Captain Beefheart, etc., records and replacing them with the compact disc versions, these records are turning up in the used bins as they never have before. These Harvard Squares go so far as to admit that the "majors are selling off current stock, dumping the excess into the cutouts..." They even sell some records at cutout prices, and someone might find a bargain here. I think I even saw one or two interesting items for \$4. I could probably find them at Wax N Facts or Wuxtry or Book Nook for \$3 or less without postage charges, but then some readers probably don't live as close to as many used record stores as I do. So check here if you're interested, but if you buy an in-print L.P. by mail for \$9.99 at this point in time you should send all the rest of your money to me at POB 8213, Atlanta, Ga., 30306 and get this catalog from POB 1975, Cambridge, MA., 02238.

**Libertarian Book Club.** Here "Libertarian" means something close to the "Anarchism" practiced and taught by folks like Bakunin, Arrigoni, and Emma Goldman, as opposed to the contemporary Libertarian Party that likes to decorate my windshield wipers with colorful leaflets. This is a highly recommendable source of books on individualism, revolution, anarchy, and related ideas. Much more than just a beginner's selection, the catalog has books by Baudrillard, Hakim Bey, Debord, Sam Dolgoff, Bob Black, Vaneigem, Colin Ward, Max Stirner, Fredy Perlman, and many many others. They also carry the latest issues of a bunch of anarchist pubs. and back issues of *Processed World* and *Anarchy Comics*. To get a catalog send a stamp to 339 Lafayette St., Rm. 202, N.Y., N.Y., 10012, USA.

**The Primal Plunge** is a lot like See Hear although located in Allston, MA., as opposed to NYC and specializing in the literary/arts end of underground publishing as opposed to music mags. Anyway, it's a crucial source for many obscure, interesting items. It could save you having to write to a dozen different addresses. Write for the catalog from 107 Brighton Ave., Allston, MA., 02134, USA.

**Johnny Puke** has a bunch of (VHS) videos (GG, *Flipside*, Gwar, Manson, NYC punks on "Donahue", Pistols, etc.) for sale for \$15 (0 to 30 mins.) or \$20 (30 to 120 minutes). They are probably all illegally dubbed. So if you are associated with any of the above named entities or you are an FBI agent please don't bother John at 217 Clark St. #4, Bristol, VA., 24201, USA.

**Rip Off Press, Inc.** The 1989, 20th Anniversary, issue of their catalog is a good source for underground comics by mail. They've got many of the favorites including the *Zap Comix* series, *Freak Brothers*, *Weirdo*, *Anarchy Comics*, *American Splendor*, Vaughn Bode's *Cheech Wizard*, and so on. You certainly will not find everything here: no *Neat Stuff*, no *Love & Rockets*! There's no *Dub Golem*, *Unscene Comix* or *Twisted Tissue* either for that matter. Send \$1 for the catalog to POB 4686, Auburn, CA., 95603, USA.

**Sound of Pig** continues to be a major source for noise, experimental music, electronic music, improvisation and more on low priced cassettes with shitty packaging. The most recent catalog I've seen had almost 200 entries and I imagine Al is working on his third hundred as I type. I would never recommend all or even most of these but among them there are worthy releases by Hudak, Big City Orchestra, Morphogenesis, Qwa Digs, the Paisley-Hued Eucalyptus Corkscrew Pavillon, *Crawling With Tarts*, *Nature & Organization*, Costes, etc. SOP has also put out many compilation tapes with the likes of the above and many many more. Write Al Margolis at 28 Bellingham Lane, Great Neck, NY, 11023, USA.

**Sub Pop Singles Club.** The biggest hype of this indie-scene semester is Sub Pop, and its reputed greatness. Humbug. That said, I'll blab about the Sub Pop Singles Club, a must for speculative record collectors out there with double digit dollars to throw out into the mail. Every month these clods release a new 7" masterpiece by Das Damen or Flaming Lips or whatever long haired fashion conscious band they latch on to. You send them \$35! They send your their latest droppings promptly, and you'll get your record "two to four weeks" after everyone else you know. You'll not only get the one or two cool records they'll put out by whoever, but you'll also get every other silly record they decide to lay on you. If you've been looking for a better deal than the Columbia CD Club join the Sub Pop Singles Club. Write them at 1932 1st Ave. #1103, Seattle, WA., 98101.

**XXX newsletter.** This is from John McSweeney of Sleep Chamber, Inner X, etc., whose products normally take up a whole page of the RRRecords catalog anyway. Here you get a chance at hot rare items like Sleep Chamber test pressings. My favorite thing about this, however, is the funny spellings, and I don't mean typos, oh no... from POB 1060, Allston, MA., 02134, USA.



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